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RUSSIAN METHODS OF INDOCTRINATING CAPTURED PERSONNEL

WORLD WAR II

By

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OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF MILITARY HISTORY

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

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W A R N I N G

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OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF MILITARY HISTORY

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

1952

F O R E W O R D

The Office of the Chief of Military History is currently exploiting all available historical source materials in the preparation of various special studies needed in the Army school system and for staff reference. The need for studies in fields pertaining to foreign military methods has been especially urgent. This study is intended to provide the Army with information on Russian methods of indoctrinating prisoners of war in a condensed and readily usable form.

The Soviet Union has placed great emphasis upon the use of propaganda as a method of conducting warfare. A study of Soviet methods of indoctrinating prisoners, therefore, is as important in its way as a study of Red Army tactics. Soviet methods of conducting ideological warfare and the aggressive aims of the Soviet Union have both been revealed in the program of indoctrinating German and Japanese prisoners captured by the Soviets during World War II. It is hoped that this study will help toward an understanding of Soviet methods of conducting warfare and will stimulate a continuing investigation of those methods.

Washington, D. C.
April 1952

ORLANDO WARD
Major General, USA
Chief, Military History

PREFACE

This study is a condensed account of the indoctrination of prisoners of war in the Soviet Union. The period covered is from the beginning of the war between Germany and Russia, June 1941, until the Soviet Union announced the completion of the repatriation of World War II prisoners early in 1950.

The Russians captured large numbers of Germans during the war. These and even larger numbers of Germans who voluntarily surrendered were held prisoners for several years. In the brief conflict with Japan in August 1945, the Red Army captured more than a million Japanese, both military and civilian, who also were held in Soviet prison camps. The Russians captured Italians, Romanians, Poles, and other European nationals, in addition to the Germans and Japanese, but the great majority of the prisoners were the latter two categories. This study, therefore, has been limited to a discussion of the indoctrination of German and Japanese prisoners.

The purpose of this monograph is to provide various agencies of the armed forces of the United States with a summary of available information on Soviet methods of indoctrinating prisoners of war. It may be assumed that the Soviets will use much the same methods in future conflicts involving the Red Army. Intelligence, counterintelligence, psychological warfare, troop

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information and education, and troop training agencies are those which are primarily interested in information of this nature.

The information upon which this study is based has been drawn from a wide variety of sources including studies made by armed force intelligence agencies in Germany and Japan. The principal sources of information concerning German prisoners, however, have been studies prepared by former German officers at the request of the Historical Division EUCOM. (These studies are cited in the footnotes as MS P-018c and P-018e.) Most of these German officers had themselves been prisoners of war in the Soviet Union and, in the course of preparing their studies, interviewed large numbers of repatriates from Soviet prison camps. Information on the indoctrination of Japanese prisoners has been based almost entirely on information collected and evaluated by the Allied Translator and Interpreter Service (ATIS) which has interrogated Japanese repatriates from Soviet prison camps. The text is fully footnoted as to sources of information used.

The author appreciates the freedom which he has enjoyed in developing his ideas and in the writing of this monograph. A sincere effort has been made to write a factually correct, unbiased study. It must be emphasized that any opinions expressed in this work are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of the Army. The author takes full responsibility for all statements of fact or of opinion appearing in this monograph.

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The writer has received much help in the preparation and writing of this study. Brig. Gen. P. M. Robinett, USA-Ret., Chief, Special Studies Division, Office of the Chief of Military History, paved the way for this project and provided valuable criticism and guidance throughout its preparation. Miss Lucy Weidman, who edited the manuscript, was burdened with an unusual share of the responsibility for the production of this study, and the author is grateful for her constructive criticism and help. The typing and much of the administrative work connected with the project was co-operatively and efficiently handled by Mrs. Irene Wilhelm. Mr. Israel Wico and his assistants have given valuable aid in securing source materials. The Foreign Studies Branch, Special Studies Division, Office of the Chief of Military History; the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, GSUSA and GHQ, FEC; the Directorate of Intelligence, USAF; and the Historical Section, EUCOM, have all been most helpful and co-operative.

Washington, D. C.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

During World War II, military doctrine of the Soviet Union emphasized the importance of capturing large numbers of prisoners of war because of their military, economic, and political value. Militarily, prisoners were useful as sources of information about the enemy. Economically, their manpower and technical knowledges were of great importance to Soviet industry. Politically, they were considered valuable as potential converts to communism and, as such, a means of extending Soviet political power over the nations represented by the prisoners. Additionally, prisoners had value during the war as vehicles of propaganda in the Soviet psychological warfare program.

Prisoners of war in the Soviet Union were, with few exceptions, segregated in camps according to their nationality, and the Soviet indoctrination program varied slightly with each national group involved. The Russians made some attempt to adapt their approach to conform with recognized psychological characteristics of the various nationalities, and the content of their propaganda varied with the interests, prejudices, and aspirations of the nations represented by the prisoners. A comparison of methods used with various nationalities, however, reveals that basic methods were much the same in all instances. This universality of method can be ascribed to the purpose of the program which was the same with all

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nationalities although minor, changing objectives were pursued from time to time during the progress of the war and the uneasy peace which followed.

A great majority of the prisoners held by the Russians during the period covered by this study were Germans and Japanese.¹ This study, therefore, will be confined to a discussion of the methods of indoctrinating or propagandizing prisoners of war of these two nationalities in the Soviet program of utilizing prisoners for political (and propagandistic) purposes. It may be assumed that Italians, Poles, Rumanians, and other European nationals taken prisoner by the Soviets were subjected to similar indoctrination programs.

The number of Germans and Japanese who suffered capture by the Soviets during and after World War II will probably never be accurately determined, not even by the Russians.² During the war, Soviet propaganda had mentioned as many as 6,000,000 prisoners of war, but on 4 May 1945 the Soviets announced through TASS, their official news agency, that the total number of German war prisoners in the USSR was 3,180,000. On 5 May 1950, however, TASS announced that 1,939,063 German prisoners had been repatriated since the end of the war, and that 9,717 convicted of war crimes along with 3,815 whose war crimes were being investigated were still being held; otherwise, except for fourteen prisoners who were ill, the repatriation of German prisoners was said to be complete. Chancellor Konrad Adenauer of West Germany countered the TASS announcement

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the following day with the claim that the fate of 1,500,000 German war prisoners remained uncertain and that the German people could not accept as true that this many German-missing had died or been killed. He further stated that on the basis of statements made by returnees tens of thousands of Germans were known to be held in the USSR as slave labor.

The lack of agreement regarding the number of German prisoners held by the Soviets has been paralleled by the controversy regarding the number of Japanese, both military and civilian, taken prisoner in the brief war between the Soviet Union and Japan in August 1945. On 22 April 1950, TASS announced that the return of 510,409 prisoners of war to Japan had completed the program of repatriating Japanese from the Soviet Union. This was aside from 70,880 prisoners whom the Soviets claimed to have released immediately after hostilities in 1945. The Soviets also stated that they were retaining 1,487 Japanese who had been sentenced or who were under investigation for war crimes, 9 who were subject to repatriation after medical treatment, and 971 who had committed "serious crimes" against the Chinese and who had been "placed at the disposal" of the Chinese People's Republic. The TASS announcement caused great consternation in Japan since the Soviet figures fell short of Japanese official estimates by approximately 370,000, about half of whom were presumed dead. Death lists had been compiled solely on the basis of information received from returnees since the Soviets had failed to submit such information despite repeated

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requests from the Japanese and various Allied Powers.

Despite the lack of exact figures, the significant fact is that several million persons were held as prisoners of war in the Soviet Union during and after World War II. These millions of individuals have all been exposed to an intensive indoctrination program, and at least some of them have become followers of communism. Another important fact which emerges from the controversy regarding numbers of prisoners is that large numbers of prisoners were still being held in the USSR even as the Soviets were announcing the completion of their repatriation program.

Much evidence indicates that the Soviets failed to repatriate many prisoners because of political as well as economic considerations. Scientists, technicians, skilled workers, and ordinary laborers have been retained because of their economic value, but a large percentage of the intelligentsia among the prisoners has been held, presumably because the individuals of this group have not been receptive to Soviet indoctrination and are potential leaders of opposition to the extension of Soviet power in their native countries if repatriated. Some estimates put the number of prisoners denied repatriation as high as a million and a half persons.⁵ Most of these detainees have been convicted (on trumped-up charges) of war crimes, a device employed by the Soviets which gives a semblance of legality to their retention. Under international law, a person convicted of war crimes loses his status as a prisoner of war and, hence, loses his right to repatriation.⁶

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CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND AND AIMS OF THE SOVIET
PRISONER-INDOCTRINATION PROGRAM

Communists firmly believe that communism will eventually sweep the earth, replacing all other social and economic systems. The indoctrination of prisoners of war is one of many means used by communists to achieve their goal of world revolution.

In the early days of the Soviet Union, the idea that a proletarian state could exist in a world predominantly capitalistic was incompatible with Marxian theory. In 1920, for instance, Lenin stated, "We cannot live in peace -- memorial services will be sung either over the Soviet Republic or over world capitalism." ¹ Bolshevik leaders of the time were convinced that revolutions must take place in surrounding capitalistic nations or the venture in Russia was doomed to failure. Despite their efforts and contrary to their predictions, other revolutions did not take place; neither did the capitalistic nations combine to crush the new Communist state. A re-examination of Marxian theory resulted in a bitter struggle within the Communist party of Russia. Stalin, with his thesis of "socialism in a single country," gradually gained ascendancy while the proponents of international revolution, led by Leon Trotsky, were ousted from power.

Stalin directed his efforts to strengthening the Soviet Union and regularizing relations with other countries. Nationalistic

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propaganda, blatantly chauvinistic in nature, was employed to unify the Russian peoples. Opportunism was the order of the day, and communistic principles were seemingly sacrificed when necessary to strengthen the Soviet Union internally or to buy peace and economic concessions from other nations. Although the Moscow-directed Third International continued its mission of fostering revolution in other countries, its activities were kept somewhat in check during the late 1920's and the 30's to permit Soviet diplomacy more flexibility. ²

Despite loud protests to the world of their peaceful intentions, the Soviets continued to proclaim at home that the Soviet Union was at war with the capitalist world. This theory is reflected in the opening declaration of the Constitution of the USSR: "Since the time of the formation of the Soviet Republics, the states of the world have been divided into two camps: the camp of capitalism and the camp of socialism." ³ The Communist party of Russia never actually relinquished the idea of extending its influence to other nations. The party merely concealed its intentions and revolutionary activities abroad while the Soviet Union was girding strength for the inevitable conflict. During this period, however, it would seem that nationalist trends in the Soviet Union had their effect on the aims of the Communist party, aims which came to be identified (by other nations at least) with the expansionist policies of the Soviet Union. The zeal for internationalism which motivated the early communists was subverted for use by Soviet leaders to achieve national objectives. In other words, the crusading aspects of

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communism were absorbed in the Soviet plan of aggression.

By the time World War II broke out in Europe, nationalist trends in the Soviet Union had resulted in an attitude on the part of the Soviet Government toward its neighbors which bore considerable resemblance to the imperialism of Tsarist Russia. There were important differences, however, between the Tsarist and Soviet types of imperialism, differences which were based on Soviet implementation of Marxian theory.

An important point of difference between old and new Russian imperialism was that the Soviets set no limits, in principle at least, to their expansion. Their fanaticism absolved them of any obligation to adhere to accepted standards of international morality, and their diplomatic dealings with other nations were characterized by conscienceless opportunism. Soviet policy simply could not recognize lasting alliances with capitalist powers.

Early in his career, Stalin outlined clearly the policies of Soviet diplomacy. In 1921, he wrote, "The object of the [Communist] party is to exploit all and any conflicting interests among the surrounding capitalist groups and governments with a view to the disintegration of capitalism." In 1924: "Contradictions, conflicts, and wars among the bourgeois states hostile to the proletarian state are the reserves of the revolution." Catering first to one power and then to another, creating antagonism between states when possible, using puppet states to fight their battles, blocking constructive action by international organizations -- Soviet diplomacy has twisted

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and turned through the maze of world politics since 1921, never deviating from the revolutionary policies proclaimed by Stalin.

The methods of Soviet conquest are another point of difference between Tsarist and Soviet imperialism. They are the methods of the revolutionist. These methods are not to be confused with those of the bomb-throwing, leaflet-passing, bewhiskered anarchist so often pictured in cartoons. The Communist party of Russia has developed a complex, sternly disciplined international organization which conducts espionage abroad on a large scale, enlisting the services of nationals of foreign countries who have been won over to communism. Party members, keeping their affiliation secret, worm their way into high posts of government, business, labor, education, and the press. Patriotic, cultural, and religious organizations are infiltrated with operatives who deflect the purposes of those organizations toward Communist objectives. The secret minorities support local revolutionary movements, stimulating and abetting attacks on established authority. Soviet opportunism has interpreted communism so flexibly that the solving of almost any social or economic problem in a capitalist nation can be identified with Communist aims. Communist propaganda in the guise of patriotism floods the country with subversive plans for solving national problems -- plans which, on the surface, are attractive to underprivileged or dissatisfied minority groups within the country. The real aim is to weaken the capitalist nation militarily and economically, to confuse and divide the populace, and to bring about a state of complete

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demoralization. Eventually, the Moscow-directed group within the country seizes power and maintains control with terroristic methods, and once the nation has fallen within the Soviet orbit it is subjected to a process of complete social disintegration. In these and other ways, revolutionary methods of communism have become tools of Soviet imperialism.

During World War II, millions of prisoners of war, largely Germans and Japanese, fell into the hands of the Soviets. Germany and Japan had been key objectives of Soviet imperialism since the beginning of the Soviet Union. In keeping with their traditional methods of conquest, the Soviets seized this opportunity to carry propaganda into the enemy camp on a large scale. If all, or a large part, of the prisoners were to become champions of Soviet ideology, the Soviets could easily afford to repatriate the prisoners, sit back and let time take its course.

The aim of the prisoner-indoctrination program was, therefore, to convert all prisoners to communism. Large numbers of the more fanatic and able of the prisoners were given special training to fit them for underground revolutionary activities and for leading positions in economics, administration, police, and political guidance. These functionaries, with secret support and direction from Moscow, were expected eventually to take over the governments of their respective countries by means of traditional revolutionary methods. These states would then fall naturally into the Soviet orbit of control with a minimum of effort and without the necessity

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of military action on the part of the Soviet Union. A secondary aim of the program, in keeping with Soviet diplomatic methods, was to create hatred against the principal Western powers ideologically opposed to the Soviet Union -- The United States, Great Britain, and other members of the British Commonwealth. The long range objective of the program was the extension of Soviet political power over the countries represented by the prisoners and, eventually, throughout the world. Prisoners who would not accept Soviet indoctrination and who could be expected to oppose Soviet expansion in their native countries were, in many cases, denied repatriation.

Minor tactical objectives of the indoctrination program were sought at times during World War II. Indoctrinated prisoners were solicited to act as agents, subversives, and saboteurs or to carry on various phases of the Soviet psychological-warfare program. Accomplishments in these fields were related to the immediate military effort and may be classed as by-products of the indoctrination program.

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CHAPTER III

INDOCTRINATION OF PRISONERS DURING EVACUATION

A. Red Army Prisoner-Evacuation Procedure

Soviet methods of processing and evacuating prisoners of war during World War II were based largely on a set of instructions issued by the Deputy Peoples' Commander of Defense in February 1940. These instructions, supplemented by various war-time directives, outlined an orderly, humane procedure which differed considerably from practice, particularly during the early phases of the war.

On the whole, Red Army instructions concerning evacuation followed common-sense practices observed by most armies and included provisions for disarming; search; segregation; interrogation; indoctrination; guarding; feeding; and general treatment. None of the written instructions violated standards of prisoner treatment accepted by most civilized nations.

The instructions called for a rapid evacuation of prisoners under guard from the point of capture up to and through assembly points. Division and army were the most important echelons in the evacuation procedure, one or more of the others often being bypassed. At division, the most important field interrogations took place, and at army the prisoners were turned over to troops of the Peoples' Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) for transport to permanent prisoner-of-war camps.

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The emphasis upon speed in evacuation seems to have been motivated largely by a desire to put prisoners in the hands of the NKVD as soon as possible. This organization, the principal security agency of the Soviet Union and a direct agency of the Communist party, operated the prisoner-of-war camp system in the USSR and conducted the indoctrination and the strategic interrogation programs. Only a few of the more important prisoners with valuable military information were questioned above army level by military intelligence personnel and probably at the sufferance of the NKVD. ² Normally, the military was permitted to interrogate prisoners only on matters pertaining to the immediate tactical situation.

Two agencies other than Red Army intelligence and the NKVD were involved in the prisoner-evacuation procedure. These two organizations were: (1) the Main Political Directorate and (2) Special Sections of the NKVD (OO NKVD), succeeded early in 1943 by the Red Army counterintelligence agency known as GUKR NKO (Smersh).

The Main Political Directorate of the Peoples' Commissariat of Defense was the agency chiefly responsible for indoctrinating prisoners from the time of capture until they were turned over to the NKVD. This directorate maintained political staffs in the field headquarters of the Red Army in echelons down to and including divisions. The principal functions of this agency were the strengthening of the Communist party in the Red Army, the political

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indoctrination of Red Army troops, partisans, and civilians in occupied areas, and the conduct of psychological-warfare in the field. Personnel were attached to the various staffs as political officers or "commissars" while others were assigned to troop units where they exercised a decisive influence in maintaining morale and fighting spirit in the ranks. Prisoners were subjected to a detailed interrogation by members of the political sections, usually at the divisional level.³

Nominally a part of the Red Army, the Main Political Directorate was actually an agency of and took its orders from the Communist party. During the war with Finland, the ranking political commissar of a unit outranked the military commander on all matters, including military tactics. The commissars lost their authority on strictly military matters in 1940 (after the Finnish Campaign), had this authority restored during the military reverses of the summer of 1941, but were reduced to the status of assistant commanders for political matters only in October 1942.⁴

The counterintelligence agencies which had a part in the prisoner-indoctrination program were military branches of the huge surveillance organization which the leaders of the Soviet Union have used to discover and stamp out all opposition to the regime. The agency which first conducted this counterintelligence function was the notorious Cheka, later known as the OGPU. In 1934, the OGPU was incorporated in the Peoples' Commissariat of Internal Affairs as the GUGB. Surveillance sections of the OGPU which had operated

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within the Red Army were enlarged and renamed Special Sections (Osobyj Otdel) of the NKVD (OO NKVD). During the war, the GUGB was separated from the NKVD to become the Peoples' Commissariat of State Security (NKGB), but the surveillance functions over the Red Army were transferred to the newly organized Main Directorate of Counterintelligence (GUKR) under the Peoples' Commissariat of Defense. This organization was nicknamed Smersh, a contraction of two words meaning "Death to the Spies." Actually, it was a "paper" change only. Members of the OO NKVD donned Red Army uniforms, changed their organization's name to Smersh, and continued their surveillance operations as before.

As counterintelligence organizations, the OO NKVD and Smersh were interested only in certain categories of prisoners -- specifically, enemy agents, saboteurs, and subversives, prisoners who had been assigned to enemy intelligence and counterintelligence units, and prisoners who were confirmed "fascists" (members of the Nazi party or SS units, important political prisoners, and anti-soviet fanatics in general). These prisoners were turned over to the OO NKVD or to Smersh for interrogation and evacuation. So far as indoctrination was concerned, counterintelligence functions were more or less negative in that the fanatically anti-communist elements among the prisoners were merely isolated and thus prevented from influencing other prisoners. The confirmed fascists were naturally considered unpromising subjects for pro-communist indoctrination, and many of these were killed after interrogation, particularly during the early months of the war.

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As has been previously noted, Soviet directives concerning the treatment of prisoners differed considerably from Red Army practices. Soviet military doctrine emphasized the importance of taking large numbers of prisoners, primarily because of their importance as sources of information. Immediately after the German invasion, however, hate, combined with poor training and lack of discipline, resulted in the deliberate murder of most German prisoners upon their surrender or early in the evacuation process. Whether or not the Soviet high command approved of these killings is a matter of conjecture, but they were obviously tolerated early in the war. Military commanders were faced with a critical military situation and did not pay much attention to the prisoner problem. A number of Russian documents indicate that frontline political commissars, who were conducting a violent anti-German propaganda program among the troops, were responsible for encouraging the killing of prisoners. ⁵ By the spring of 1942, however, crucial manpower needs in Russia, plus the need for more information from prisoners, resulted in changed attitudes and gradually changing practices. The Soviet high command began to insist upon adherence to regulations regarding the sparing of prisoners' lives and their speedy evacuation to the rear under healthful conditions which ⁶ would ensure their usefulness as laborers.

The victory at Stalingrad early in 1943 marked a turning point in the treatment of German prisoners. Isolated instances of the killing of prisoners continued to occur, but Red Army discipline

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improved and most of the prisoners were spared during the remainder of the war -- except for a brief period at the time of Germany's capitulations when the Red Army allegedly committed many massacres in orgies of triumphant cruelty. Evacuation conditions did not seem to improve, despite efforts of the Soviet high command, and mortality rates during evacuation continued high, particularly during the winter months. Contrary to orders, Russian soldiers throughout the war robbed prisoners of practically all their personal possessions. As a result, many prisoners, robbed of winter clothing, died of exposure on the march or in unheated box-cars during evacuation. Inadequate medical services and supplies, poor sanitary conditions, overcrowding, and shortages of food, clothing, blankets, and fuel along the route were factors contributing to a high death rate among the prisoners. - Japanese prisoners suffered similar treatment late in 1945 after the Red Army had defeated the forces of Japan stationed on the mainland of Asia.

B. Indoctrination of Prisoners During Evacuation

The 1940 instructions concerning evacuation procedures provided for the segregation of prisoners into the following groups:

(a) officers, (b) noncommissioned officers and "members of military-facist organizations," (c) privates, (d) deserters, and (e) seriously wounded and incapacitated persons. Segregation was to be accomplished immediately after the preliminary search and before evacuation to the battalion collecting point. Such instructions seem to have been

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followed by the Red Army throughout the war, except that so-called "members of military-fascist organizations" were, in practice, put in a separate group to be turned over to Smersh (or the OO NKVD).

Segregation of prisoners is practiced by most armies and has a practical value from the standpoint of intelligence; that is, enlisted men are apt to reveal more information during interrogation if their superiors have no opportunity to influence or instruct them after capture. In the Red Army, segregation also served a purpose in the indoctrination program. Enlisted men, being for the most part members of the proletariat, were considered the most promising subjects for indoctrination: consequently, they were kept apart from officers who were assumed to more "reactionary" and who could be expected to use their prestige and influence to resist pro-Soviet indoctrination.

Instructions were provided for the disposal of prisoners captured by reconnaissance or partisan units operating behind enemy lines. In the event that such prisoners could not be convoyed to Russian lines because of the tactical situation, they were to be interrogated, supplied with "suitable literature," given a brief indoctrination talk, and released. These instructions were, to say the least, somewhat unrealistic and, so far, no records have come to light which indicate that they were ever followed.

The instructions provided for the inclusion of a "political worker" (politrabotnik) and "political soldiers" (polit-boyets)

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in guard-escort groups assigned to conduct large convoys of soldiers to the rear. Political "education," however, was to take place only when the convoy was halted. Such procedures were followed in isolated instances during the war, but these instructions seem to have been largely ignored, very probably because they were impractical.

The 1940 instructions concerning indoctrination of prisoners during evacuation are significant in that they indicated pre-war Soviet thinking on the matter of utilizing prisoners of war in the long-range plan for world revolution. The theoretical basis for a prisoner-indoctrination program was inherent in communist doctrine and may be illustrated by a typical observation, relative to the Red Cross conventions, made by a prominent Marxian theorist in the early 1930's. According to this theorist, the most valuable human material was to be found not only among the soldiers of the USSR, "the real masters and builders of the socialist fatherland," but also among the soldiers of the enemy, the great majority of which were proletarians and, consequently, "eventual allies of the Workers and Peasants Republic." It follows that captured proletarians who had been fighting against the USSR would need "re-education" to convert them into "allies."

Communist theory regarding prisoners was largely ignored in the life and death struggle immediately following the German invasion of Russia and most Germans captured early in the war, including the "proletarian" elements, were killed. There are

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indications, however, that certain of the leaders did not lose their communistic ideals, even when the fortunes of the USSR were at their lowest. For instance, on 14 July 1941, less than a month after the German attack, the following order (in part) was issued by the chief of the political propaganda section of a corps to chiefs of political propaganda-intelligence units and to deputy commanders for political affairs of an attached rifle division:

During the fighting, the party-political work of the sections has revealed the following defects of a politically detrimental, and, more recently, of a criminal nature.

1. Red Army men and commanders do not take any enlisted and officer prisoners in combat. Instances of prisoners being strangled and stabbed to death have been noted. Such conduct towards prisoners of war is politically detrimental to the Red Army, embitters the soldiers of the fascist army, impedes the process of subversion, and provides the officer corps of the fascist army with evidence to be used in lying to their soldiers about "the terrors" of captivity at the hands of the Red Army, and in thus stiffening the soldiers' will to resist.

2. To the list of shameful incidents in the --th Division, a case of robbery has been added. Some Red Army men rob the prisoners of their personal effects (watches, pocket knives, razors, etc.). Such incidents undermine the dignity as well as the authority of the Red Army

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In view of the above, I order as follows:

1. Enlist all the means of party-political activity to explain personally to units and sub-units the harmful effects of such conduct towards prisoners of war, aside from the fact that it is unworthy of the Red Army. Explain that the German soldier -- worker and peasant -- does not fight of his own free will; that the German soldier ceases to be an enemy when he becomes a prisoner of war. Take all necessary measures to capture enlisted men and

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particularly officers. Put an immediate stop to all instances of looting. Inform the commands, political sections, and Party and Komsomol organizations that the possessions of the prisoners and the dead, such as weapons, and especially dispatch pouches and documents found on officers, are to be forwarded to division headquarters. Personal belongings of the prisoners . . . are not to be taken from them. Remember that prisoners are permitted to keep all their personal belongings and to wear their uniforms, even their decorations.⁸

.....

On 3 October 1941, the Main Political Directorate issued an order entitled "Directive Concerning the Political Interrogation of Captured Enlisted and Officer Personnel."⁹ This directive specified the content of the questions to be asked and the methods to be used in the interrogation of prisoners by personnel of the political sections attached to Red Army headquarters in the field (usually at division level). Although primarily concerned with interrogation, the directive is significant from the standpoint of indoctrination and was issued, it will be remembered, at a time when the Red Army was still killing most prisoners. The opening sentence of the directive stated: "From the moment of his capture by the Red Army and during the entire duration of his captivity, the enemy enlisted man (officer) must be under continuous indoctrination by political workers." The basic objectives of this indoctrination were:

- a. To discover, unmask, and isolate fascist elements;
- b. To arouse class consciousness and to re-educate along antifascist lines the soldiers who were deceived by Hitler and his henchmen;
- c. To round up soldiers of antifascist conviction and to give them a comprehensive political indoctrination.

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The political interrogation of prisoners of war was to pursue the following objectives:

- a. To ascertain the political and moral attitude of interrogated personnel;
- b. To ascertain the political and moral condition of the unit in which the prisoners served;
- c. To determine the type of ideological training which the soldiers had received as well as the subject matter of such training and the topics used in discussion;
- d. To obtain information on the effect of Russian propaganda and on antifascist activity among the enemy's front-line troops and the army rear area.
- e. To indoctrinate the prisoner morally and politically so as to unmask fascism and arouse sympathies for the Workers' Council among the elements which were socially akin;
- f. To collect material and information which might be important to Russian propaganda efforts directed at the enemy's troops and population.

Although this directive was issued in the fall of 1941, it is doubtful whether or not the political sections were able to adhere to any part of it in a systematic manner for a matter of several months. By the end of 1942, however, the tactical situation had improved, firm discipline had been restored in the Red Army, prisoners were taken in ever increasing numbers, and practically all prisoners were subjected to an exhaustive political interrogation during the evacuation process. During this interrogation, personnel of the political sections made an attempt to achieve the objectives outlined in the 1941 directive.

During the political interrogation, in which the questions were interspersed with propagandistic adjurations, some few prisoners who

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appeared to be sympathetic to the Soviet cause were solicited to participate in psychological-warfare activities, such as preparing leaflets, returning to their own lines to bring back deserters, and delivering loudspeaker propaganda broadcasts on the front lines. Apparently, they did not solicit prisoners to bear arms against Germany nor did the Russians attempt to activate units made up of German prisoners to fight against Germany, despite numerous rumors that General Walter von Seydlitz Kurzbach and Field Marshal Friedrich Paulus were leading such movements. The Russians, suspicious even of their own troops, did not trust German collaborators to this

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extent. Some few individuals were entrusted with reconnaissance activities within the German lines or with espionage missions in Germany, but only after comparatively long periods of observation, indoctrination, and training. Many individuals undertaking such missions did so only to return to their own lines where they gave

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themselves up immediately.

The Main Political Directorate no doubt made good use of information received from prisoners in the psychological-warfare program and were also able to make preliminary classifications of pro-Soviet, potentially sympathetic, and reactionary or "fascistic" elements for purposes of segregation. They seem to have fallen far short of their ideal of keeping the prisoners "under continuous indoctrination by political workers" during evacuation. The emphasis upon speed and the actual conditions existing in a combat area seem

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to have precluded the instituting of a systematic indoctrination program in the field.

As has been noted, the OO NKVD and Smersh had only a negative function in the indoctrination program. Spies, "fascists," and other categories of prisoners turned over to these organizations were considered, for the most part, incorrigible reactionaries, and little if any attempt was made to indoctrinate them. Most of those who survived the evacuation process were eventually convicted of war crimes and convicted to long terms of imprisonment in the notorious "labor camps" of the Soviet Union. From time to time, however, enemy agents who had been apprehended were subverted or "twisted around" to become agents for the Soviets. Individuals selected for such missions were usually of some nationality other than German and their consent to act as "double-agents" was achieved by coercion or promise of reward rather than by indoctrination and persuasion. An agent whose home was in an area controlled by the Soviets was considered a choice candidate for such missions since the safety of his family could be threatened if he failed to co-
12
operate.

On 8 July 1943, Stalin issued Order 171 to which frequent reference was made in both Russian and German propaganda. In this order, Stalin allegedly ordered the Soviet armed forces to accord prisoners of war especially good rations and good treatment. The purpose of the order was to encourage the desertion of German soldiers. Selected prisoners, after a period of good treatment, were to be sent back to

their own lines to persuade their comrades to stop fighting and
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desert to the Red Army. By this order, humanitarian treatment
of prisoners became both a method of indoctrination and a military
tactic. Such efforts as were made by the Soviets in this direction
were not particularly successful since German soldiers were well
aware of what would really happen to them in Russian captivity.
Furthermore, the Russians found they could not trust many of the
German prisoners who promised to carry out subversive missions.

After the founding of the "National Committee for Free Germany"
(an association of German prisoners organized in 1943), members of
the committee went to the front from time to time, met with German
prisoners soon after capture, and solicited them to co-operate in
the "Free-Germany" movement. Other Germans who had been won over
to the Soviet cause in the camp indoctrination program, the so-
called "antifas" or "activists," conducted similar activities.
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Interrogations of prisoners, even in the lowest echelons of
the Red Army, often had a strong political flavor. The interrogator
would boast about the accomplishments of the Soviet Union, criticize
Germany and its leaders, and indulge in propagandistic discourses
between questions. Such behavior was more a manifestation of the
modern Russian's crusading spirit than a planned phase of the
indoctrination program. At times, of course, the political aspects
of an interrogation were a deliberate part of the interrogator's
technique. Excursions into politics were designed to throw the
prisoner off guard, to anger him, or to cause him to reveal his
political sympathies.

Another device used to propagandize prisoners soon after capture was to have them read letters or diaries of officers found on captured or dead German personnel. The material selected was designed to demoralize the prisoners by illustrating the decadence of the German officer class or by demonstrating the defeatism prevalent in the German Army toward the end of the war.¹⁵

At times, prisoners who revealed pro-Soviet attitudes in their first interrogation were selected to go back to their lines and induce their comrades to desert. Individuals assigned such missions were given propaganda "pep talks," regaled with good food, tobacco, and liquor, promised favored treatment in the future, and slipped back across the lines with instructions concerning the time and place to return with deserters. Other prisoners, whether sympathetic or not, were sometimes required to sign prepared statements for use as propaganda or were forced to write personal letters to comrades telling the latter of the good treatment they would receive if they would desert.¹⁶ Such activities, while making use of superficial indoctrination techniques, were conducted for tactical reasons as a part of the psychological-warfare program rather than of the indoctrination program.

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CHAPTER IV

THE PRISONER-OF-WAR CAMP SYSTEM
IN THE USSRA. The Main Directorate of Prisoner-of-War Camps

During and after World War II, the prisoner-of-war camp system in the Soviet Union fell under the jurisdiction of the Peoples' Commissariat of Internal Affairs, better known by the alphabetical designation NKVD (Narodny Kommissariat Vnutrennikh Del). In 1946, this commissariat was elevated to the status of a ministry, resulting in a change of title to MVD (Ministerstvo Vnutrennikh Del). The organization and functions of the NKVD, however, underwent little or no change when it became the MVD, and the two terms will be used interchangeably in this text, according to the time at which events under discussion took place.

The principal mission of the NKVD was the maintenance of internal security.¹ Uniformed troops of the NKVD conducted frontier and coastal patrols and security operations in the rear areas of combat zones. Among other responsibilities, the NKVD controlled all local police and fire departments, maintained special troops for use against sabotage and insurrection, was responsible for passive air-defense measures, had responsibilities in the conduct of partisan warfare, and conducted other types of counterintelligence and security activities. The labor-camp system (prison camps for "political" and ordinary criminals) and many prisoners in the USSR were under the NKVD.² Control of prison labor, both domestic prisoners and prisoners of war, involved the NKVD in extensive construction, mining, fishing, and development

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projects. Providing manpower for construction and maintenance of all roads and highways, for instance, was one of the responsibilities of this commissariat.

The organizational structure of the NKVD consisted of approximately eleven main directorates (Glavnoye Upravleniye). Some of these directorates had counterparts in governments of the various republics of the USSR: others, such as the Main Directorate of Prisoner-of-War Camps, were "All-Union" organizations which directed their operations from Moscow without reference to the republics.

Only generalized information is available on the organizational structure of the Main Directorate of Prisoner-of-War Camps. The following discussion is based on reports by German and Japanese repatriates, both groups of which seem to agree on most particulars. ³

Japanese sources indicate that a so-called Administration Control Bureau (Kanri Kyoku) was established in each republic or province where prisoners of war were interned. This bureau was responsible directly to the Main Directorate of Prisoner-of-War Camps in Moscow and was divided into seven sections: Labor, Personnel, Political, Health, Planning, Supply, and Counterintelligence. The area over which an Administration Control Bureau had jurisdiction was divided into districts (Chiku). In each district was established a headquarters which administered the operation of prisoner-of-war camps located in that district. ⁴

Available German sources make no mention of the Administration Control Bureaus. According to them, the Soviet Union was divided into

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districts in each of which was established a headquarters designated as a District Directorate of the Affairs of Prisoners and Internees responsible directly to the Main Directorate in Moscow. The commander at district level was responsible for appointing the camp commanders within his district. At least three officers served on the staff of the district commander: (1) a political officer in charge of the prisoner-indoctrination program which included the operation of a school for the advanced training of prisoners selected from the camps; (2) an operations officer in charge of interrogations and investigations, and (3) a sanitation officer (presumably in charge of housekeeping operations).

A camp commander (nachalnik lagera) was assisted by a staff which included officers in charge of the following sections: mess supply, clothing supply, political, labor, finance, and administration and transport.

The camps were assigned guard and escort personnel by the Main Directorate of NKVD Troops in Moscow. A District Directorate for Escort and Convoy Troops (Oblastnove Pravelnie) supervised and directed such troops at the district level. A so-called Command of an MVD Escort and Convoy Garrison (Nachalnik Garnison Konvoinikh Voisk MVD) was the lowest echelon (camp level) in this branch of the MVD troops. Guard personnel was assigned to an ordinary camp at a ratio of one guard for every twenty to sixty prisoners. Romanian and Slovak deserters were often used as guards for German prisoners and were usually cruel and malicious in their treatment

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of Germans. In many instances, skilled workers or technicians among the prisoners were assigned individually or in small groups to labor installations under very little supervision. Large gangs of prisoners doing heavy labor sometimes were virtually without guards during the working day, it being almost impossible to make good an escape from deep in the interior of Russia. Labor gangs of prisoners were often put under the command of collaborating prisoners who were more strict and overbearing than most of the Russian guards.

The prisoner-of-war camp commander (Chief of Camp Administration) was responsible only for matters of camp administration and military security measures; to a certain extent, he carried out his duties through an organization consisting of ranking prisoners who performed necessary administrative tasks and acted as liaison between the Soviet commander and the prisoners. 7
The chief of the NKVD assigned to the camp, however, was the final authority in all matters pertaining to the operation of the camp, and he could overrule the camp commander on administrative matters if he wished. The chief of the NKVD of a camp was called the "political commissar" by the prisoners and was directly responsible for the indoctrination and interrogation programs, political schooling, and the confinement, release, and transfer of prisoners. 8
The commissar also worked closely with the labor officer in the matter of assigning prisoners to labor projects and in the setting of work quotas. The political commissar was usually not higher in rank than a first lieutenant (and was sometimes a woman), but he outranked the camp commander, often a lieutenant colonel or

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colonel, even in matters of social protocol such as the seating
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arrangements on a stage at a meeting.

Beginning in 1946, the prisoner-camp-administration group and the so-called Aktiv, an organization of politically trained and reliable collaborating prisoners, were gradually merged so that senior Aktiv members gradually usurped camp administrative positions formerly held by ranking (but non-collaborating)
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prisoners. Thus, the political commissar, who directed the activities of the Aktiv, came to have an even more powerful control over the destinies of the prisoners.

Since the indoctrination of prisoners was a responsibility of the political commissar, a knowledge of the characteristics of a typical commissar is of importance to an understanding of the indoctrination methods which he used.

The Bolshevik leaders succeeded at a very early date in fostering a uniform type of leader throughout Russia. These leaders were chosen from the ranks of the Communist party and given years of special training to fit them for a variety of positions. Their ideological training was uniform throughout, resulting in a singleness of purpose and a uniformity of method employed to attain the Communist goal. The political commissars of the prisoner-of-war camps may be considered prototypes of the true Communist.

The true Communist is filled with a fanaticism derived from his faith in Marxism. He is a revolutionary and is ruthless in his methods of achieving his objectives. He is a complete

materialist, acknowledges no God, and considers everything, even a human being, as matter to be formed and molded according to the Communist plan. His faith in the righteousness of the class struggle permits a moral code which recognizes no humanitarian or chivalrous limitations in his dealings either with individuals or states. Any means which can be used to achieve the Communist goal of world revolution are right and good. These characteristics of a communist are related to his aims and are strikingly revealed in the methods used by political commissars to indoctrinate prisoners of war.

B. Camp Conditions

A prisoner-of-war camp was designated by a number and could consist of a main camp and several sub-camps. The latter were designated by the number of the main camp followed by the number of the sub-camp (e.g., Camp No. 726 and its sub-camps, 726/1, 726/2, and 726/3). Camp areas often covered hundreds of square miles, sub-camps being set up near labor projects or factories to reduce the time consumed in going to and from work. The sub-camps frequently housed more prisoners than the main camp.

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According to German sources, the following general types of prisoner-of-war camps existed in the Soviet Union:

1. Labor Camps: These comprised about 95 per cent of the camps and contained prisoners of all ranks except general officers. All prisoners from the rank of private through

captain were required to work. Staff officers were occasionally required to work, contrary to orders from Moscow.

2. Staff Officers' Camps: There were several staff officers' camps quartering a total of approximately 2,500 officers.

Living conditions and treatment were poor in most of these camps. Staff officers were segregated from other prisoners to prevent them from exercising any influence over junior officers and enlisted men.

3. General Officers' Camps: These apparently existed in conjunction with staff officers' camps. A few high-ranking individuals, such as Field Marshal Paulus and General Sydelitz, were provided separate quarters with comparatively luxurious surroundings.

4. Convalescence Camps: From 1946 to 1948, each major administrative district contained a camp where physically weakened prisoners were sent to convalesce. Thefts of food by the Soviet personnel, however, precluded any real improvement in the prisoners' health. Since prisoners in these camps could not work to earn additional food rations (a privilege granted about this time), they were often worse off than prisoners in labor camps.

5. Special Camps: Most of the prisoners in these camps were specialists. Some camps were set up for the interrogation of experts in various industrial fields, scientists, and military specialists; others existed in conjunction with special

industrial enterprises. Specific classes of prisoners, such as those who at one time had held diplomatic assignments or who had traveled abroad (suspected of espionage), were segregated in special camps. The so-called "state-controlled camps" /Legie-Lager/, to which all alleged political offenders of entire units were sent in 1949, are included among the special camps. A very few "model camps" were set up to impress foreign visitors or high-ranking German prisoners whom the Soviets were attempting to subvert. Living conditions, even in these camps, were far from the ideal visitors were led to believe. ¹³

6. Penal Camps: All prisoners who displayed anti-Communist attitudes or who otherwise offended those pro-Soviet prisoners in positions of authority over other prisoners were sent to these camps. The heavy physical labor performed by prisoners in these camps led to physical collapse after a maximum of three months.

7. "Silence Camps" /Schweigelager/: This category includes some of the camps listed under 5 and 6, about which detailed information is lacking. The term "silence camp" arose from the fact that some or all of the prisoners in these camps were forbidden to send and receive mail.

These seven general categories have been listed because they represent a realistic classification based on observed differences between the various types of camps; the official Soviet classification based on administrative differences was undoubtedly quite different.

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In addition to camps, the NKVD operated many prisons, including the notorious Lubyanka Prison in Moscow. Practically no prisoners of war were held in such prisons. Except for occasional high-ranking officials of the enemy who fell into Soviet hands (Hans Fritzsche, for instance) and suspected enemy agents, these institutions were used to incarcerate domestic political offenders. 14

Prisoner-of-war camps were scattered throughout the Soviet Union and were generally located in the vicinity of work projects. The camps varied greatly in size and in their physical set-up according to the purpose of the camp and the availability of shelter. Almost invariably there was too little shelter, and overcrowding was the result. Accommodations ranged from old monasteries converted for prisoner use in the so-called model camps to earthen bunkers with grass roofs in forest areas. Brick factory buildings and wooden barracks in industrial areas, wooden huts or barracks in more sparsely populated regions, and tents in the warmer areas were common types of billets. Camps often had to be built by the prisoners themselves after they had arrived at a work site.

Prisoners either slept on the ground or on tiers of wooden shelves which served as bunks. They were fortunate if there was straw to sleep on, blankets being rare in most camps; barely enough room was provided for all the men to sleep at one time. The prisoners huddled together for warmth and contagious diseases flourished. Windows, if there were any, were generally broken; fuel for

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the rude stoves was scarce during cold weather; and the billets were infested with vermin.

The compounds were normally surrounded by several barbed wire fences or wooden fences topped with wire. Gates were heavily guarded; watch towers equipped with searchlights were spotted at intervals around the perimeter of the camp; trained dogs were sometimes used to patrol the area outside the fences. Washing and latrine facilities were usually in the open. Every camp had a jail or "punishment bunker" which usually consisted of a number of underground, solitary-confinement cells, unlighted and unheated. Each camp also had a hospital, but conditions in these institutions were little better, as a rule, than in the billets. Medical supplies were entirely inadequate and surgical facilities were primitive. German doctors, under the supervision of Soviet medical personnel, were assigned to each camp and won praise from other prisoners for their devotion to their duties. Camp living conditions and the lack of medicine, however, prevented effective application of their labor and knowledge.

Officers' camps were more comfortable, comparatively speaking, than those for enlisted men. Certain of the camps where specialists were interrogated or where selected prisoners were sent for advanced political training ("antifa" schools) provided excellent accommodations similar to the best furnished for Red Army troops. Practically no information is available on the punishment or "silent camps," but it may be assumed that conditions in these camps were even more rigorous than in the worst of those for enlisted men. Quarters for

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camp-administration personnel and guards were better than those provided for the prisoners, although poor by western standards.

The low standards of living in Russia must be kept in mind when Soviet prison-camp conditions are under discussion. Many former German prisoners who have complained of sub-human living conditions and of brutal treatment have qualified their statements by admitting that the average Russian farm or factory worker fared little better. The lot of Soviet citizens imprisoned in "labor camps" (prisoners convicted of war crimes were also put in these camps) were even worse than that of prisoners of war. The same general methods of control used to keep the Russian masses obedient and to win them over to the revolutionary aims of communism were used with prisoners of war.

C. Prisoner Treatment

General

The treatment of prisoners of war in the Soviet Union bore a direct relationship to the prisoner-indoctrination program; that is, harsh treatment was used as a coercive method of indoctrination, the promise of better treatment was used as an inducement to collaborate, and good treatment was exploited for its propaganda value. Collaborating prisoners who had been given choice posts of authority over the other prisoners enjoyed comparatively superior quarters and rations as part of their reward for throwing in their lot with the Soviets. The collaborators also received more and better tobacco

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than ordinary prisoners; normally, cigarettes were issued at the rate of one or two a day per prisoner and were made of mahorka, the poorest quality of Russian tobacco.

Practically no new clothing or footwear was issued to prisoners until long after the war. Having been robbed of most of their warmer clothing soon after capture, the prisoners as a group were under-clothed and suffered greatly from exposure during cold weather. What clothing they had quickly became ragged and filthy; worn-out shoes were replaced with wrappings of rags. Prisoners, nevertheless, were made to work for long hours in below-freezing temperatures; frost-bitten limbs and sickness caused by exposure resulted in a high casualty rate among prisoners who were forced to work in the open.

The slow starvation suffered by prisoners in Russia seems to have been the most agonizing feature of their imprisonment and overshadows all else in accounts of their sufferings by returnees from the Soviet Union. Hunger is one of the most demoralizing experiences to which a man can be subjected. It made proud German staff officers rummage in garbage cans for bits of food, and many a prisoner betrayed his comrades for an extra slice of bread. Prisoners who failed to meet the almost impossible work quotas were punished by a reduction of their already inadequate rations: they were spurred to greater efforts by promises of extra food if they would exceed the quotas. The one most effective inducement to accept, or pretend to accept, communist doctrines seems to have been the comparatively lavish rations enjoyed by collaborators. Undernourishment competed with epidemic diseases as the principal cause of the high death rate in

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the prisoner-of-war camps.

There is much evidence to indicate that the Soviet leaders have used hunger deliberately as their most important "method of control," not only over prisoners of war but also over the population of Russia. This theory is one which has been expounded at length by various German repatriates.

The quantity and quality of rations varied from camp to camp and at different times during the war and the post-war period. The standard ration, however, seems to have consisted of thin vegetable soup three times a day along with 300 to 600 grams of black bread of very poor quality. This ration was not only inadequate and poorly balanced from a food-value standpoint, but it was also incredibly monotonous. Alarmed at the high death rate in the camps in 1943, when prisoners who survived the battle of Stalingrad claimed they were receiving only 50 grams of bread a day, the Soviet high command apparently established a ration for prisoners in 1944 which provided a total of 2,300 calories per day for enlisted men and 2,500 per day for hard laborers and officer prisoners. Even this standard was inadequate and was not met in most camps. The situation was aggravated by corruption among Soviet officials: underfed guards stole prisoner rations and greedy camp commanders diverted supplies into the black market.

It was not until late 1946 that the food rations began to improve. At times, the prisoners received a little pay for their work, but during the war there was little or no way of purchasing

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extra food. Beginning in 1947, prisoners began to receive a fairly substantial wage for their labor, a large portion of which was deducted for "living expenses," but with what remained they were able to buy small amounts of food and other items. After the currency conversion reform in December 1947, prisoners were able to buy food at official prices. This improved the situation for prisoners to a marked degree, although many prisoners noted little change until 1949. A majority of both German and Japanese returnees from Russian prison camps required special medical treatment because of the malnutrition and the general mistreatment they had suffered.

All prisoners were required to work with the exception of the very sick and the higher ranking officers. The quota (norm) system, hated by Russian workers, was used with prisoner labor to get as much work out of them as possible. Under this system, a time limit was set beforehand for the accomplishment of a certain amount of work, the amount invariably being greater than had ordinarily been accomplished within that time limit. This system resulted in eight to fourteen-hour workdays, six days a week, the prisoners being forced to work as long as necessary to complete the quota. If the prisoners met the quota by working faster or by means of superior organization and skill, they were penalized by being given higher quotas. If they failed to meet the norm, they had to work longer hours or, perhaps, suffered a reduction of their already inadequate rations -- a punishment which resulted in still lower production. Camps where the prisoners worked in stone quarries,

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in lumber mills, at road construction, excavating, and mining became known as "death camps." Skilled prisoners put to work in factories usually fared better since they were able, as a rule to surpass the production of Russian workers and were favored by the factory managers who were, themselves, under relentless pressure to increase production. After working long hours, the prisoners were forced to perform various camp duties and to attend propaganda lectures or political meetings several evenings a week.

Discipline in the camps was severe. Even minor infractions of the rules often resulted in harsh types of punishment such as solitary confinement or a reduction of rations. Informers among the prisoners reported infractions to camp authorities promptly. Camp guards were frequently brutal and beat prisoners who lagged on the march, worked slowly, or otherwise incurred their displeasure. Such conduct was against the rules, but the guards were seldom taken to task by their superiors for mistreating prisoners. Interrogations usually took place at night, and a prisoner under investigation was sometimes questioned night after night but would have to continue his regular day-time work schedule. Prisoners who refused to cooperate with their interrogators or who were suspected of lying underwent third-degree methods of interrogation, including unusual forms of physical cruelty, solitary confinement, and systematic starvation which frequently left them mental and physical wrecks.

Added to the physical mistreatment to which prisoners were subjected was the mental agony which most of them suffered. Imprisonment

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is a demoralizing mental experience, even under the best of physical circumstances. This aspect of imprisonment was intensified in the Soviet Union by the atmosphere of fear which was deliberately created in the prison camps. Fear of non-repatriation seems to have been the most disintegrating emotion suffered by most prisoners, but competing with this was fear of death, fear of denunciation by a fellow prisoner, fear of more severe physical mistreatment, and worry about their families at home. The Soviets permitted practically no exchange of prisoner mail until about 18 1947.

The demoralizing effect of fear was augmented by the Soviet technique of keeping the prisoners in alternating states of hope and despair. The method used was simply to make but not fulfill promises. A characteristic of Communists is their "unparalleled impudence in lying," to quote a German writer on the subject.¹⁹ A Communist will lie glibly at any time and on any occasion if by lying he can further the communistic program. Time and again the political commissars made promises to the prisoners; almost invariably the promises were broken. Wanting to believe, the prisoners were sustained by hope for a season; when it became obvious that the promise was broken, they would be plunged in despair. One of the most diabolical of Soviet practices was to put a prisoner's name on a repatriation list and then remove him from the shipment at the last moment. Frequently, a prisoner would actually be

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entrained with a shipment of returnees, only to be taken off and sent back to camp before the train reached the Russian border.

Recreation facilities were not provided in most camps, nor was there much time for recreation, particularly in the labor camps. Reading matter, if any, was usually pro-Soviet literature. Religious worship services were permitted in various camps from time to time, but prisoners who participated in the services were regarded with suspicion and were liable to be discriminated against by camp authorities.

Prisoners who did not die from starvation, overwork, or exposure were weakened by their living conditions, and they fell easy prey to epidemics which swept through the camps. Diphtheria, typhus, cholera, spot fever, and malaria were the most common epidemic diseases. Dysentery, edema, dystrophy, and other conditions brought on by malnutrition or improper diet took a heavy toll. It was not uncommon for a camp of hundreds of men to be reduced to a mere handful within a period of a few months.

About once a month, prisoners in most camps were mustered for a cursory medical examination and divided into six classes ranging from healthy to very sick. The first two classes were required to work eight or more hours a day; classes three and four had to work six and four hours a day, respectively; class five was put in a convalescent company; ²⁰ class six consisted of those suffering from extreme malnutrition (dystrophy - progressive muscular atrophy).

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Classes five and six did not have to work and were put on a ration of 3,000 calories per day. In one camp in 1947, 125 out of a total of 700 survivors of Stalingrad fell into the last two categories.²¹

One prisoner reported that the physical examination in his camp consisted of an attempt by a Soviet doctor or nurse to pinch the exposed buttock of the prisoner. If there was enough flesh remaining to pinch between the thumb and forefinger, the prisoner was considered strong enough to work.²²

Phases of Prisoner Treatment

A short discussion of prisoner-of-war treatment in the USSR must of necessity be highly generalized and cannot take into account many deviations from the more common practices which have been described in this chapter. Of importance to this study, however, are the changing practices to which prisoners in the Soviet Union were subjected. According to former German prisoners, there were five distinct phases in Soviet methods of handling prisoners of war between 1941 and 1950.²³

Phase One began with the German attack on Russia in June 1941 and lasted until the spring of 1942. The number of prisoners taken alive was very small, but those who survived capture and evacuation seem to have been treated comparatively well once they reached a prisoner-of-war camp. Except for a few reports from escapees, little information is available; it would appear that practically no individuals captured during this phase survived the six or seven

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years of imprisonment which took place before the Russians began their repatriation program. Reports from a few German officers captured in 1941 indicate that the Soviets conducted a planned indoctrination program with prisoners during this phase, but the approach was more or less indirect and little pressure was exerted to secure co-operation.

Phase Two began in the spring of 1942 and lasted nine or ten months, that is, until the Battle of Stalingrad. The number of prisoners taken was still small and there have been few survivors, although prisoners were apparently still treated fairly well in the camps. The need for prisoner-labor and prisoner-information strongly influenced a change in Soviet policy concerning prisoners during this period. Red Army soldiers received strict orders to spare prisoners' lives; the prisoner-interrogation program underwent reorganization and the prisoner-indoctrination program in the camps received more emphasis.

Phase Three began with the Battle of Stalingrad (December 1942 to early February 1943) and continued until Germany's capitulation in May 1945. Beginning with Stalingrad, huge numbers of prisoners fell into Russian hands. The Soviets were in desperate need of manpower: therefore, Moscow ordered that the lives and strength of prisoners be preserved so that more work could be secured from them. Rations and living conditions did improve in some camps, but the prisoners were forced to perform very hard labor and large numbers of them were literally worked to death. Recuperation and convalescence

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camps for prisoners were established, but comparatively few prisoners benefited from these facilities. The prisoner-interrogation program was well organized and functioned efficiently. The indoctrination program received impetus and new direction with the promulgation of a large scale insurrection plan in the form of the National Committee for Free Germany. This Committee, the German Officers' Association, and various "clubs" organized for the same general purpose of inciting rebellion against the Nazi regime were gradually being supplanted by the "antifa" (anti-fascist) movement by the end of hostilities. The ordinary prisoner of war in a labor camp was subjected to a fairly well-organized but not very effective program of indoctrination which consisted of evening "political" meetings, lectures, and group discussions. Attendance at these meetings was ostensibly voluntary but actually compulsory. Selected converts of communism were sent to "antifa" schools and, after completing their training, were given more and more responsibility for the operation of the camps and the indoctrination program (under close supervision of Soviet camp authorities).

Phase Four began in May 1945 and continued until the autumn of 1947. The end of hostilities was marked by an immediate and severe deterioration in the treatment accorded prisoners of war by the Soviets. Hundreds of thousands of Germans who surrendered en masse after the capitulation were herded into prison camps and forced to work for the Soviet Union. The principle of the collective guilt of the German people formulated by the Allies was used by the

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Soviets as a pretext to treat the prisoners as outlaws and to use them as "living reparations." Thousands were massacred upon surrender, and thousands more died in the camps from overwork, starvation, exposure, disease, or violence. Former German prisoners refer to this phase as "the punishment years." the indoctrination program in the camps was practically dropped and little attempt was made to win new converts to communism. The National Committee for Free Germany and similar organizations (having served their purpose) fell into discard and were replaced by the antifa movement. In their interrogation program, the Soviets concentrated on learning everything the Germans knew about the western powers, particularly about Great Britain and the United States. They also compiled a detailed history of Germany's part in the past war. All pretense of desiring a democratic Germany or Japan was dropped by the Soviets, and the true nature of their plan to bring these countries within the Soviet orbit became obvious. Toward the end of this phase, the Soviets also dropped all pretense of friendship with their erstwhile allies and began a propaganda campaign of hate against England and America.

Phase Five began in the latter half of 1947 and, for purposes of this study, lasted until the Soviets announced the completion of their repatriation program early in 1950. At an Allied Powers conference in April 1947, it was agreed that all prisoners of war would be repatriated by the end of 1948 (an agreement which the Soviets failed to fulfill). The various governments, including the USSR, submitted their repatriation plans in August 1947, after which

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prisoners in the Soviet Union noticed a marked change in Soviet policy. Conscious of a last direct opportunity to propagandize prisoners, the Soviets revived the antifa program with new intensity; living and working conditions for prisoners were improved and they were treated with more consideration than at any time in the past. Most of the prisoners simulated an enthusiasm for the antifa program to insure their repatriation. In order to retain as many slave laborers as possible and, also to prevent the return of certain classes of prisoners who could be expected to become leaders of anti-Soviet movements in their native countries, the Soviets convicted thousands of selected prisoners as war criminals and sentenced them to long terms of imprisonment in labor camps. Such action deprived the convicted individuals of their status as prisoners of war and gave a similitude of legality both to their retention in the Soviet Union and to the Soviet claim that all "prisoners of war" had been repatriated.

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Throughout the foregoing discussion, the terms "good" and "bad" treatment were used in a relative sense only. The treatment of prisoners by the Soviets was consistently far below the standards prescribed in the Geneva Convention of 1929. Even the collaborators who were treated well by any standards sometimes found themselves in disrepute and discriminated against once their temporary usefulness to the Soviets had ended.

A paper written by a German medical doctor, chief physician of a convalescence home for repatriates, begins with an explanation

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of why most returnees from Russia suffered from a variety of physical and mental ailments. An excerpt from this paper is quoted here because it so aptly summarizes conditions under which the average German prisoner existed in the Soviet Union. The following passage is preceded by a description of hardships suffered during the evacuation process.

What the prisoners saw and experienced in camp . . . were wooden fences with barbed wire, guard towers with searchlights, camp gates guarded by sentries, Russian soldiers and officers, hours of waiting and roll calls, and many hours of physical search during which their last possessions were taken from them. Then they were marched to the bathhouse where all hair on their head was clipped and all body hair was shaved off, including also the pubic hair. For washing they were given a small pan with warm water and a cake of soap the size of half a matchbox. That was all the soap and water there was. The clothing they received from the delousing plant was torn, stiff with dirt, steaming and malodorous.

They slept in dark, wooden barracks in which there were two or three tiers of bunks along the walls. There was a lack of straw, and not a single blanket. The windows were broken, the floors rough and there was vermin. Fortunate was the man who still had a tattered greatcoat or jacket, for he could cover himself.

On the following day the prisoners were assigned to various work brigades. The daily routine was as follows: after getting up there was breakfast, consisting of 750 grams of thin soup made with a dirty piece of fish and some cabbage; then there was roll call at the gate; marching to the place of work; eight hours or more of arduous labor without a break; return to the camp; roll call at the gate. Lunch consisted of 750 grams of thin soup made either with fish, diced potatoes, bones or tainted tripe, plus cabbage, millet or barley, followed by 300 grams of "Kascha," a broth containing cabbage, potatoes or barley; then followed a few hours of work in the camp since it had to be organized. Supper consisted of 750 grams of thin soup with the usual ingredients, to which was added a daily ration of from 400 to 600 grams of moist bread made of coarse grain, chaff and straw. As dessert the prisoners were served an "anti-Fascist" lecture delivered by a Russian officer or a German anti-Fascist.

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In addition, the men were interrogated, punished by confinement or the assignment of extra duties, or by being put into penal units. These conditions lasted for years, during which time the prisoners had no contact with their relatives. When finally allowed to write, they often received no reply to the one monthly post card which contained no more than 25 words. Food was for years the foremost topic of discussion in all wards and work places. For years everything was standardized: The work, the time, the rations, one's place on the bunk, the water for bathing, the soap for washing, the post card home. . . .

The camp abounded with informers placed by the notorious operational branch of the MVD. Friends betrayed friends. Almost daily, especially during the final period, comrades disappeared and were never heard of again. The question that occupied every prisoner's mind was: "Will I ever go home?" One thin ray of hope remained: "I shall manage it somehow, some day I shall return home!"

A miserable existence such as this, especially if it extends over a long period of time, must inevitably leave a permanent imprint on a man, in fact, two types of imprint: disabilities of the body and of the soul. 25

In order to camouflage the treatment prisoners had suffered, the Russians usually subjected them to a "fattening-up" cure before returning them to their homes. The prisoners were required to do little or no work while being fed food rich in carbohydrates which were stored in their bodies in the form of fat. This flabby, watery layer of fat lent the returnee a specious appearance of good health, but he still suffered from a lack of necessary proteins. Many bodily deficiencies failed to make an appearance during captivity because biological and functional activities were reduced and simplified and because, when survival is threatened, the body eliminates many so-called luxury functions. It was only after returning home that many prisoners became sick, noticed a slackening in the energies, or were subject to excess perspiration and insomnia.

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CHAPTER V

METHODS OF INDOCTRINATING
GERMAN PRISONERS OF WARA. The Indoctrination Program before StalingradIntroduction

Comparatively little information is available on the indoctrination program in Soviet prisoner-of-war camps during the early phases of the war. Few prisoners were taken, practically none of whom survived the subsequent years of imprisonment. The few available reports, however, agree in most particulars and may be considered fairly reliable.¹

At the beginning of World War II, German soldiers were in possession of strong ideological counterweapons against pro-Soviet propaganda. Communism had attempted to establish itself in Germany after World War I and had been rejected. Subsequently, communism and the Soviet Union became prime targets of a violent propaganda campaign by the National Socialist party under Hitler, and the average German prisoner had been indoctrinated for years with the idea that communism was "World Enemy Number One." Most of the German prisoners had participated in Hitler youth organizations and had applauded Germany's rise to power under the leadership of the Nazi party. The German Army was flushed with success and had no reason, yet, to acknowledge the superiority of Soviet arms or culture. The low living standards and the limited industrial

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accomplishments of Russia which the German invaders saw at first hand served to sustain their prejudices against communism.

Aware of the hostile and unreceptive mental attitude possessed by most German prisoners, Soviet planners of the indoctrination program adopted an approach which was persuasive and educational rather than coercive and violently propagandistic. No attempt was made at first to force pro-Communist ideas upon the prisoners.

German Communists in Russia

Working within the framework of the NKVD was a group of German Communists who were largely responsible for planning and carrying out the indoctrination program among German prisoners. Most of these Germans had emigrated to Russia about the time Hitler seized power in Germany. In Moscow, they were trained for years in schools where, since the Bolshevik Revolution, thousands of foreign nationals have been trained as a part of the Soviet long-range program for spreading communism throughout the world. Significantly, many of the German emigrees who conducted the propaganda program in the camps during the war took over most of the important posts in the government of the Eastern Zone of Germany after the war.

At the head of the German emigree group was Wilhelm Pieck, former member of the Reichstag, majority leader of the Communist party in Germany, and a man with a long record as a Communist organizer and agitator. The second most important personality was Walter Ulbricht, a driving power in the movement and a most obedient

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follower of Stalin; he usually worked in the background and is said to have been especially clever in camouflaging objectives and in gaining the confidence of others by misrepresenting facts.² Anton Ackermann, Eric Weinert, Dr. Friedrich Wolff, Dr. Frida Rubiner, and other emigree intelligentsia from Germany, including several prominent writers, assisted in the program. They were joined by former German Communists who deserted to the Russians at the beginning of the war. Many of the lesser prisoners of this group were assigned to prisoner-of-war camps as political commissars. The activities of the German Communists were no doubt closely supervised by high ranking Soviet personnel. General Sherbanov seems to have played a leading part in all propaganda activities and in winning over certain prominent German personalities (Generals Walter von Seydlitz and Vinzenz Mueller, for instance.)³

Non-Communist prisoners or deserters sometimes became prominent "Communist" leaders among the prisoners very early in the war. Typical of these was Dr. Ernst Hadermann, a former member of the Stahlhelm (a German monarchist party of the 1920's), a cell leader in the Nazi party, and a school teacher by profession. A reserve officer (Captain) in the Wehrmacht, he was reported "missing" in September 1941, and by mid-1942 he had turned up as an extremely active pro-Soviet organizer, speaker, and writer in Soviet prisoner-of-war camps. In that short time, he had become rabidly anti-Nazi.⁴

Within the group of German emigres (and a few trusted collaborators), the Soviets solicited a few individuals to participate

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actively in the war against Germany. Such recruiting was rare in the camps. Despite rumors to the contrary, the Soviets did not attempt to organize German volunteers into military units to fight against Germany. Such Germans as were solicited or accepted to take an active part in military operations were used largely in psychological warfare (loudspeaker broadcasts, the preparation of leaflets); some served as scouts with Red Army units; and others were entrusted with espionage, sabotage, or partisan-warfare missions. German enlisted men were sometimes solicited soon after capture to go back to their units and persuade their comrades to surrender. Otherwise, the number of German prisoners who took an active part in operations against the German Army was negligible, and those who did were selected from a small circle of tried and trusted Communists. With their characteristic mistrust of foreigners, the Soviets never accepted large numbers of collaborators, and the idea of activating German⁵ military units among the prisoners was apparently intolerable.

*

Methods of Indoctrination in the Camps

Compared with the indoctrination program after Stalingrad, early efforts to propagandize prisoners were lax and unsystematic.

*

For specific examples, see Appendix I, Items 1-3. Two of the three cases involve prisoners who became collaborators, went to advanced schools, and accepted assignments as saboteurs or espionage agents against Germany. Since few prisoners were won over during this period, these two cases are not typical but are presented in this study because they afford information concerning the advanced training and utilization of collaborators.

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A definite program for the indoctrination of prisoners had been planned, however, and it was put into effect soon after the first Germans began to arrive in prisoner-of-war camps. In contrast to their harsh treatment upon capture and during evacuation, the treatment of these first prisoners in the camps was very good and the attitude of the camp authorities was friendly. Prisoners were even allowed to write to their families (though few of the letters were sent to Germany). This good treatment was definitely a part of the initial plan of creating a friendly attitude toward the Soviet Union and was not motivated by humanitarian considerations.

In some camps, libraries provided a wide variety of reading material for the prisoners, including many books by leading writers on communistic theory. The Soviets apparently hoped that the prisoners would read this literature voluntarily and, by a process of self-education, come to accept communism.

German-speaking political commissars in the camps (some of whom were German emigres) gave the prisoners preliminary instructions soon after the latter arrived in the camps. Prisoners were informed that freedom of speech was permitted and that the facilities of the camp newspaper (which was a "free press") would be available for the purpose of expressing their views. The prisoners were warned, however, not to hold any secret meetings of any sort and that there be no threats or reprisals against others who expressed contrary views.

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The political commissars then organized prisoners according to age, occupation (or social background), and nationality (Germans, Austrians, Italians) into discussion groups. Attendance at meetings of these groups was compulsory in some camps, optional in others. During the first meetings, many pro-Nazi as well as anti-Nazi views were expressed with no objections from the commissars, but minutes were taken at the meetings and kept on file. A meeting of a discussion group usually began with a short talk by the commissar introducing the subject to be discussed. With officer prisoners, the commissars went rather deeply into communist theory, and all prisoners were exposed to a certain amount of Bolshevik ideology. The commissars dangled the delights of communism before the prisoners but did not invite them to partake. The principal topic of discussion, however, was the evil of fascism, and the purpose seemed to be to persuade the prisoners to become anti-fascists. It was as if a Christian evangelist were persuading his listeners to renounce sin without urging them to become Christians.

The commissars pointed out the defects of fascism as manifested in Germany, Italy, and Spain by citing specific examples, and they emphasized the purely humanitarian aims of the Soviet Union, including the latter's "unimpeachable" peace aims of both the past and the future. Roosevelt, Churchill, the Atlantic Charter, and the strength of Russia's allies were mentioned occasionally, and Stalin was praised as a representative of general tolerance and benevolence.

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Prominent German Communists of the emigree group soon began to tour the prisoner-of-war camps to hold discussions and to give lectures, both to mass meetings and to the small "discussion groups." The audiences were bombarded with slogans and with diatribes against Hitler. Pro-Soviet stooges scattered among the listeners led applause at appropriate intervals and otherwise attempted to give the meetings an air of spontaneous enthusiasm for the program advocated by the speakers. These Germans interviewed former Communists and sympathizers and newly-won converts among the prisoners and selected those who were considered reliable enough to become supervisors of the program in the camps or to be sent to "anti-fascist" schools for advanced training. Other German Communists wrote and published a newspaper which was distributed regularly in the camps along with numerous pamphlets, leaflets, and posters.

The principal themes of the propaganda were the certainty of Germany's defeat and the fact that Hitler and the Nazi party were leading Germany to utter ruin. To assist in the early overthrow of Hitler was lauded as a patriotic rather than a treasonable act -- Hitler had deceived them, and the principal obligation of the prisoners was to the German people. According to the German Communists, Germany's only salvation was in early defeat, after which a "democratic" government could be established which would work in peace and harmony with the Soviet Union. Prisoners who assisted in Hitler's downfall, the Soviets implied, would naturally occupy

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respected positions of power and influence in the government of a post-war, democratic Germany.

The fact that the speakers were of German nationality won over a few prisoners at the outset of the program, but a majority were repelled by what they considered traitorous conduct on the part of the German emigres. The latter had been away from Germany too long and had lost touch with developing attitudes in that country; as a result, their approach failed in its appeal to proletarians among the prisoners. Their slogans were outdated and were interspersed with Soviet phraseology which was completely alien to German workmen. Prisoners were not only indifferent to such propaganda but, what was worse, they often thought it was ridiculous. The emigres were both provoked and dismayed to find their carefully planned program meeting with nothing but rejection from all but a few old Communists, an equally small number of impressionable individuals, and a few opportunists who expected material rewards for their collaboration.

The Soviets broadcast many radio "demonstrations" by prisoners of war beginning late in 1941. These programs were beamed at both Germany (where listening to such programs was forbidden) and at prisoner-of-war camps (where they were "required listening" on the part of prisoners). Moscow frequently broadcast reports of speeches by prominent German prisoners at political meetings. A typical speech, an "Address to the German People" broadcast in November 1941, was followed by announcements that the "Address" had been "signed"

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by 765 prisoners in one camp and by 805 in another.

In June 1942, an elaborate demonstration was staged in Moscow by prisoners from Camp 27 (located near Krasnogorsk) which was first broadcast in its entirety and then repeated in sections on following days. Speeches on this broadcast were printed on leaflets and dropped in large quantities over Germany. A majority of the participants in this "spontaneous" demonstration were merely actors in a carefully rehearsed play. The prisoners read speeches written by German emigrants, and the "studio audience" (presumably all prisoners but actually mixed with a number of Red Army personnel) burst into applause at carefully planned intervals. This broadcast was typical of many given during the war and was a part of the Soviet psychological warfare program.

The founding of the first schools for the training of prisoners who had been won over by Soviet propaganda took place during 1942. The first of these was founded in Moscow under the leadership of a Russian professor named Janson, probably a former Dane. In these schools the "students" were given several months of instruction in Communist theory and in methods of leadership. These early students were later to play leading parts in the indoctrination program and various prisoner "movements."

An Early "Antifa" School

The purpose of these schools was to train men to conduct the anti-Fascist propaganda program in prisoner-of-war camps. Only

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Germans and Romanians attended the school described here: three German groups of from twenty-five to thirty men each and one group of twenty Romanians; three Germans and one Romanian made up the faculty. The students dressed in civilian clothing. The commandant was called Schulleiter (school leader) and had the rank (approximately) of a battalion commander; he was assisted by an administrative officer with the rank of lieutenant. The school was surrounded with a barbed wire fence, and guards manned the four watchtowers.

Four subjects were taught in this particular school. These subjects were:

- (1) The First Imperialistic World War
- (2) The Second Imperialistic World War
- (3) Development /Aufbau/ of Soviet Russia
- (4) Marxism

The course of instruction lasted four months, and the four subjects were taught in succession, the first lasting two weeks, the second six weeks, and the third and fourth one month each. Each student had to make both oral and written presentations to the class at the end of each course. Classes, interspersed with study periods, lasted from 0900 to 2100 hours with two hours off for lunch.

The courses on the two world wars included the reasons for the wars and discussions on the treaties of Versailles and Locarno. According to the instructors (who stressed this point), the same men who financed the first world war also financed the Nazi party and

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World War II. England and America were discussed only as allies of the Russians, and their great strength was emphasized as a reason why it was futile for the Germans to continue fighting. "Imperialism" was interpreted to mean German "totalitarianism," not as an aspect of British or American imperialism.

The course on Soviet Russia consisted of a review of Russian history from 1870 to 1942. The revolutions, the London conferences, the operations of Socialists and Communists in 1912, and Soviet foreign policy (including the nonaggression pact with Germany in 1939) were discussed along with the difficulties experienced in building the Soviet state and the "Sovietizing" of farmers in Russia after World War I.

The course in Marxism was in two parts: (1) theory as expounded by Marx, and (2) the practice of Marxism in the Soviet Union with Lenin's contributions to Marxian theory and developments.

B. Indoctrination from Stalingrad to the End of the War

The Effect of the Defeat at Stalingrad

The reverses which the German Army suffered during the winter of 1942-43, culminating in the defeat at Stalingrad, resulted in the taking of huge numbers of prisoners by the Russians. Among the prisoners were many high-ranking officers and general officers. This period also marked the beginning of an intensive indoctrination program among the prisoners. With this military success, Russian arrogance asserted itself, and prisoners began to receive harsh

treatment in the camps where thousands of them were literally worked to death in a forced labor program. The "voluntary" aspect of indoctrination was largely dropped at this time. Prisoners were required to attend numerous "political meetings," to accept (or pretend to accept) the teachings of the commissars, and to participate in "anti-fascist" movements.

By the end of the war, the Russians were to abandon their pretense of desiring only "anti-fascist" attitudes on the part of prisoners and to begin openly to solicit their adherence to communism. The pretense of desiring only a "democratic" Germany was also to be dropped at the end of the war as Russia took over the Eastern Zone of Germany and began its usual program of "Sovietizing" that area. The indoctrination program immediately after Stalingrad, however, was still intensively "anti-fascist" and "anti-Hitler."

The morale of German prisoners was low following the defeat at Stalingrad where the German Sixth Army under Field Marshal Paulus was forced to surrender. The prisoners felt that they had been deserted by Hitler and the Fatherland. The German Communist emigrees and a number of Soviet commissars now instituted a program designed to win over disgruntled elements, particularly among high-ranking prisoners. This was in accordance with Lenin's doctrine of fomenting world revolution by enlisting the services of dissatisfied individuals in a "capitalist" state.

Among German general officers, the Soviets sought out those who were embittered because of Hitler's distrust and ill-treatment of

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the "old guard" in the German officer class or because of Hitler's blunders in the conduct of military operations, especially at Stalingrad. They looked particularly for ambitious men who were attracted by promises of important positions in a post-war, "democratic" Germany. Among the well-educated German prisoners, most of whom had served as officers, the Soviets looked for professional men -- lawyers, physicians, educators, theologians -- many of whom were intellectually and spiritually opposed to Hitler and who feared for the future of Germany under national socialism. Non-commissioned officers and enlisted men among the prisoners were subjected to the propaganda program as well, but the tactics used with these groups were more often those of coercion, starvation, and intimidation. Forced attendance at "political" meetings, rabble-rousing speeches, posters, slogans, and other tools of the mob psychologist were used in attempts to "convert" these men into anti-fascists -- and later into Communists.

A certain amount of intimidation was no doubt used to secure the "co-operation" of the high ranking and otherwise prominent prisoners who eventually collaborated with the Russians in the forming of the National Committee for Free Germany. Most of these prisoners, however, were apparently won over with a line of reasoning centering around the idea that to hasten the defeat of Hitler was a patriotic rather than a traitorous act.

The Russians made much of a situation which existed in 1813 when the Prussian General Yorck von Wartenberg reached an agreement

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with the Russians and turned against Napoleon. This act was instrumental in causing Napoleon's defeat, and, despite the disapproval of the King of Prussia, Yorck became a national hero. The Russians dangled this historical precedent before the eyes of ambitious Germans. General Walter von Seydlitz, one of the most important leaders of the anti-Hitler movement among captured German officers, often compared himself to Yorck. The commander of a surrounded German corps made the following entry in his diary on 10 February 1944: "My old division commander of 1940, General von Seydlitz, today sent me a long letter delivered by aircraft: He thinks I should act like Yorck during campaign of 1812 and go over ¹³ to the Russians with my entire command. I did not answer."

According to one German officer, a former prisoner, the argument used by the commissars ran something like this:

Germany's situation is hopeless! You, Herr General, as a good soldier, are best able to judge that. You know that Adolf Hitler is leading the German people to destruction by his insane policy and strategy. After Hitler's fall the important thing for us Russians is to have a strong and friendly Germany on our side. Think of the blessings of Bismarck's foreign policy! Think what advantages the Russo-German alliance in the 19th century brought to both nations! We do not require you to become Communists. Regulate the social problem in the future Germany according to your own principles. Communism is not an exportable article. . . . Think of Germany after the war! In view of our struggle with the capitalistic countries of the West we need you! 14

To utter refusal to the above line of reasoning was especially difficult for ambitious men, especially when the following was added to the above argument: "You, Herr General, are the man to influence

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the officers' corps in this way. You are the man to assume one of
the highest executive positions in the future Germany!"¹⁵

The basic tenets of the propaganda campaign at this time, to summarize them briefly, seemed to be: (a) Hitler had brought ruin to Germany and defeat was inevitable; (b) only Russia, by virtue of its economic might and reserves, could check economic disaster in Germany and assist in her recovery; (c) the primary condition for a solution to the problem was the willingness of a post-war "democratic" Germany to collaborate with Russia (with the present German prisoners in positions of leadership); (d) proof of the success of such a plan was to be found in Russia where the Soviets had achieved success by applying rational, "democratic" methods in solving their problems.

The National Committee for Free Germany

By July 1943, six months after Stalingrad, a sufficient number of high-ranking German officers and other prisoners had been won over to the anti-Hitler movement to enable the Soviets to announce the formation of the National Committee for Free Germany (National-komitee Freies Deutschland), often referred to as the NKFD. The president of this organization was the German emigree, Erich Weinert. Serving as vice-presidents were General Walter von Seydlitz, General Elder von Daniels, Major Karl Hetz, and emigrees Ulbricht and Pieck. A number of other generals (Vinzenn Mueller, Martin Lattmann, Aron von Lenski, Otto Korfes) and several officers from well-known

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families of German nobility were selected to serve as members of the Committee, the Soviets apparently assuming that such names would carry weight with the German "masses." Seydlitz, for instance, was the descendant of a German national hero of the same name who was victor of the Battle of Rossbach and a favorite of Frederick the Great. Lieutenant Count von Einsiedel, a member, was said to be a great-grandson of Chancellor Bismark. (The Soviet assumption that such names would carry prestige was erroneous according to some German observers, having an effect opposite to that intended.) The total membership of the NKFD numbered between forty and fifty
16
individuals.

The inauguration of the NKFD, said to be spontaneously demanded by the prisoners, took place in Moscow with typical Soviet pomp and circumstance. German delegates from all prisoner-of-war camps, wearing their uniforms and decorations, marched in formation to a hall decorated in black, white, and red -- the old imperial colors of Germany. On the wall in huge letters were slogans: "Hitler must die in order that Germany may live," and "For a free, independent Germany." Erich Weinert presented a report on the origin of the Committee and an outline of its tasks and aims, after which the prisoners pledged themselves to fight for liberty against Hitler. Other speakers, in a series of inflammatory addresses, dealt with a wide variety of subjects: Nazi ideology, the defeat at Stalin-grad, the unity that had finally been realized in the Committee

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only on Russian soil, the decline of German health because of nazism (presented by a physician), the sufferings of "Protestant Peasants" under Hitler (presented by a chaplain), the calamitous strategy of the German high command, and the meaning and importance of the NKFD. After the election of chairmen and members of the Committee, a manifesto was adopted and published which was later dropped in leaflet form over Germany. The Soviets gave world-wide publicity to the whole affair.

The military members of the NKFD were removed to a camp near Lunovo where they were subjected to an intensive period of instruction by prominent German and Soviet personalities on the aims of the movement and the methods of realizing those aims. These men were clever and competent speakers. Historical and philosophical themes were cautiously discussed along Marxist lines, but no direct attempt was made at that time to convert members to communism. In fact, few of the members of the Committee ever became Communists, and many eventually resigned when they found how they had been deceived into furthering the Soviet plan of aggression. At the moment, however, the emphasis was on the campaign against Hitler and the founding of a post-war German government based upon an independent political-party system. Members of the NKFD were taken on tours through Moscow where they were shown impressive glimpses of Russian military and industrial might and were entertained lavishly at concerts, operas, dramas, ballets, and banquets. Misconceptions of Soviet treatment of a majority of prisoners and the Soviet way

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of life thus fostered by the Russians resulted in statements by members of the Committee which aroused derision among other prisoners and hindered the NKFD so far as its propaganda value in the camps was concerned. The members of the Committee, however, unaware of the true state of affairs or of the underlying Soviet purpose, responded to their treatment by writing articles, making speeches, broadcasting appeals to the German people, writing personal letters to friends among the commanders of the German Army urging them to turn against Hitler, recruiting followers among newly captured prisoners, and signing almost any statement or manifesto their Soviet masters desired to publish under their names. There are indications that the Soviets often released statements attributed to individuals who never saw the statements before they were published, nor would they have consented to their publication.

The founding of the NKFD touched off the beginning of a tremendous propaganda effort in the prisoner-of-war camps. Freies Deutschland (Free Germany), a newspaper with its masthead bordered in black, white, and red, was published and distributed throughout the camps. This newspaper carried distorted news stories of the military situation and inflammatory articles written by members of the NKFD (or articles signed by them). Copies of this paper were dropped behind the German lines at frequent intervals. The propaganda effort in the camps was still directed along anti-Fascist rather than pro-Communist lines.

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The NKFD consisted of only a small group of individuals and needed an instrument to maintain closer personal contact with the increasing number of German prisoners in Russia. Among these prisoners, the officers evinced a strong dislike for Russians and were the least amenable, as a group, to an indoctrination program conducted by Soviet personnel. Since the Russians were particularly anxious to enlist the support of the officers, the German Officers Association (Bund Deutscher Offiziere), the BdO, was founded shortly after the initiation of the NKFD. General von Seydlitz was made president of this association. At least nine other generals and numerous officers of lower rank served on the Steering Committee of the organization.¹⁷ The leaders of the NKFD and of the BdO consisted of practically the same personnel, thus assuring close co-operation between the two organizations. The German emigrees, of course, were not eligible for membership in the BdO which was made up entirely of officer prisoners. Immediate efforts were made to enlist as many officers as possible in the organization. Practically speaking, the BdO was merely an extension of the NKFD into prisoner-of-war camps.

Many of the officers who had been induced to join the BdO were brought to the indoctrination center near Lunovo where they received additional instruction. (The center consisted of at least two camps, one in and one near Lunovo.) From these camps, they were sent as

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individuals or teams to other camps to carry on indoctrination among other German prisoners. Many were sent as emissaries to the front lines where they made loud-speaker broadcasts and met with newly captured German prisoners. Many were sent as emissaries to the front lines where they made loud-speaker broadcasts and met with newly captured German prisoners. The front-line emissaries were always accompanied by specially selected Soviet officers. In the camps, the emissaries worked under the supervision of the local political commissar and co-operated with the camp "antifa" organization.

Selected generals addressed the German people over the Moscow radio. Some of these volunteered such services, others performed under mild duress. Members of the NKFD and the BdO were also required to write personal letters to their former comrades on the German front. These were either dropped from planes near appropriate German headquarters or, in some cases, delivered personally by BdO officers who had parachuted behind the lines. The sole aim of these letters was to break German resistance.

A group of generals and other officers was formed in Lunovo and worked for more than a year, under the direction of Mrs. Rubiner, an emigree, preparing text-books for post-war German schools. From the Soviet point of view, this was a constructive activity since it kept the officers busy and prevented them from formulating their own ideas. Furthermore, it resulted in the production of Communist instruction material which would be ready for immediate use in post-war Germany.

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Continued military reverses, incessant propaganda, news about German war crimes and atrocities, and the Soviet tactic of constantly fostering the idea of collective German guilt for the present world disaster gradually brought about a change in attitude on the part of a large number of German officers and enlisted men. This consciousness of collective guilt led to the belief among the German prisoners that it was their duty to co-operate in creating friendly relations with Russia to atone for the wrongs done her by Germany. The program, however, was not based entirely on appeals to the intellect and the conscience: the Soviets also used hunger and fear in achieving their objectives. The following passage is from a paper written by a former German officer who was a prisoner in the Soviet Union:

. . . A clergyman told me of an experience dating from 1944-45, which I must repeat.

There were about 900 officers and enlisted men billeted in a camp near Moscow. Propaganda, based on terrible hunger, was carried on for the National Committee for Free Germany. Added to this was the artificially cultivated fear that those men who did not join the committee would never see their homes again. A further effect was produced by the hope that those who joined the committee would be safe from proscription. One convinced oneself that Germany's salvation lay in co-operation with Russia after the war. Although their eyes were wide open the men no longer realized that the actual facts in politics, the conduct of the war and the treatment of prisoners proved the opposite. The Soviet Union wanted to annihilate Germany, and the few men who perceived this did not dare to say so, for that would have been counterpropaganda, punishable with forced labor in Siberia. Thus, the majority parroted the Communist phrases of peace and good will on earth. They clung to them all the more, because their conscience drove them in a different direction. The number of non members of the National Committee dropped more and more with each meeting. At first there were still 450 out of 900 who stood fast under the nervous strain, then 400, then 300, 100, 50, 30. The

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number dropped to five! In April 1945, these five were lonely and alone, outlawed by all as traitors to the cause of Germany's future, and repeated to each other the words of Martin Luther: "There is nothing more dangerous than to act contrary to the voice of conscience!" They were three chaplains of the Protestant Church, which was persecuted by the National Socialists, one of them a regular officer and one of them a convinced National Socialist! In such a way had the front shifted!

In other camps the numerical proportion between non-members and members of the National Committee was considerably more favorable -- about fifty percent among the officers. This example is only intended to show the effect exerted on people by the combination of the various Communist methods of control over a fairly long period of time. . . .¹⁸

The skill with which the Soviets worked to win over important prisoners is illustrated by the case of Field Marshal Friedrich Paulus, former commander of the German Sixth Army which surrendered at Stalingrad. The Russians were particularly anxious to make use of Paulus in their propaganda program, but he was not an ambitious man (in the way Seydlitz was). Despite considerable pressure, he would not declare himself for more than a year after his capture in February 1943. Finally, in the summer of 1944, Melnikov, Chief of the NKVD, invited Paulus, several German generals, and a number of senior NKVD officers to a champagne breakfast. In the course of the meal, Melnikov received a telephone message, supposedly from Stalin, that a Polish delegation in Moscow was proposing active co-operation with Russia after the war and were demanding that a portion of eastern Germany up to the Oder-Neisse line be ceded to Poland. Stalin, according to Melnikov, preferred to co-operate with a strong post-war Germany, but he required that Paulus

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join the NKFD and take over the "educational work" necessary for Russo-German co-operation, as well as guarantee that Germany would be on Russia's side during coming political events. Only under these conditions would Stalin respect the 1938 German borders. Stalin further requested the decision from Paulus by noon the next day.

Paulus joined the committee, an event enthusiastically announced throughout the world by the Soviets. They did not publish the fact that Paulus resigned a few days later after he, Lt. Gen. Schmidt, and a General von Arnim convinced themselves in a series of conversations that they had been the victims of a swindle. The Soviets continued to publish statements and articles attributed to Paulus (most of which he probably knew nothing about), and rumors of a Paulus Army, allegedly recruited from among German prisoners, persisted throughout the non-Soviet world until the late 1940's.

Sometime later, the Russians blandly admitted the swindle by publishing the result of the Russo-Polish negotiations. (The Soviets of course, never recognized the Polish Government in Exile in London.) As had been expected, the Oder-Neisse line had been designated as Germany's eastern border. Not only Paulus but all members of the NKFD had been promised that Russia would respect Germany's territorial boundaries after the war. These promises had not been made by authorized persons in their official capacities. Rather, they had

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been made by Soviet generals and high-ranking NKVD officials who had dropped repeated "hints" along this line. The Russo-Polish agreement, therefore, did much to alienate many German officers who had, up to that time, accepted Russian promises at face value. 20

The Indoctrination of German Chaplains

Captive German chaplains were singled out for special attention in the prisoner-indoctrination program carried on by the Soviets during and after World War II. To win a German chaplain over to communism was a major triumph, but the chaplain became a valuable ally of the commissar if he did no more than make sympathetic statements about the Soviet cause. On the other hand, the chaplain who remained firm in his convictions was an annoying hindrance to the commissar's program as well as a source of great spiritual strength to other prisoners who looked to him for guidance. [See Appendix II]

Chaplains were among that group of prisoners whom the Soviets sought out as being elements of a nation dissatisfied with the current regime. Most clergymen in Germany had been horrified by the rise of nazism and embittered by Hitler's anti-Christian policies. The political commissars, therefore, found little difficulty in persuading many chaplains among the prisoners to make statements against Hitler and to enlist their support to anti-Fascist movements. With the chaplains, the Soviets emphasized the idea of collective German guilt, clergymen being by nature and training particularly sensitive to this kind of an approach.

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A chaplain in a Soviet prison camp who had been duped, persuaded, or coerced into supporting the Soviet cause was a very real help to the political commissar in the latter's program of bringing about a state of political and spiritual demoralization among the prisoners. The disaffection of a chaplain was all that was needed to persuade some prisoners to throw their lot in with the Soviets. Others, disgusted and disillusioned, turned away from religion, thus becoming more vulnerable to the appeals of expert Soviet propagandists.

Under the sponsorship of the NKFD and the BdO, a meeting of German chaplains was organized in Moscow in 1944. Clever, well-versed Soviet officials convinced those present that the Soviet Union was the protector of all who had suffered persecution because of their faith. The fact that the Soviets guaranteed freedom for religious as well as anti-religious attitudes was stressed. Chaplains present at the meetings reacted as the commissars had planned. They went back to their camps preaching the "gospel" of Soviet friendship for Germany. Many of them wrote articles favoring the Soviet Union for the newspaper, Free Germany. Crucifixes and copies of the Bible were distributed among the prisoners, and orders went out from Moscow stating that religious services were to be tolerated in the camps.

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But religious services were not permitted by the political commissars in many camps despite orders from Moscow. This constituted a much used technique of the Soviet propagandists: to

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announce certain policies of the Soviet Union but to negate those policies (as secretly as possible) in practice. It may be assumed that collaborating chaplains were encouraged to hold services -- under the watchful eyes and ears of the commissars; otherwise, numerous means were employed to discourage the holding of religious services in the camps. If a chaplain was present, services could be held, but many of the younger chaplains were made to work at exhausting tasks as common laborers and were not free to preside at services. Appropriate space and time were not provided for worship. The names of prisoners who attended services were reported to the commissars by informers, and such prisoners found themselves discriminated against as "reactionaries." As a result, it was not an uncommon practice to hold short religious services clandestinely in latrines.

The pressure applied to the chaplains was much the same as that put on all the higher-ranking prisoners. An atmosphere of suspicion and fear pervaded Soviet prisoner-of-war camps. Informers reported every significant remark made by prisoners, and often they acted as agent provocateurs in attempts to trap prisoners into making statements which were punishable by Soviet standards. Chaplains and high-ranking officers were choice targets for the informers. Being constantly under surveillance for anti-Soviet attitudes and, at the same time, under pressure to co-operate with the Soviets, they found it took real courage to

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maintain no more than a completely neutral attitude toward politics, religion, communism, or nazism. The circumstances, however, were so well-known to all prisoners that even a neutral stand by a chaplain or any other individual was one from which others could draw strength.

It was most important for the target of such methods of indoctrination to give the commissar no pretext for intervention. In their punishment procedures, the Soviets attempted to preserve a semblance of "democratic" justice. If they were determined to punish, discredit, or eliminate an individual, they would often go to great trouble to collect evidence and witnesses -- or to secure a "confession" from the individual -- and would make a great show of democratic procedure in conducting a trial which inevitably resulted in a conviction. If the individual gave the commissar no pretext for making charges, he was reasonably safe from attack. Those who remained steadfast in their faith (to their religion or their patriotism) found that in the long run they were no worse off than their weaker or more gullible brothers.

Many chaplains who collaborated in hopes of early repatriation or through deception were to learn eventually how greatly they had been deluded. They discovered that there was no real freedom of religion in Russia and that the real object was to extend Soviet political control over Germany. The chaplain who tried to back out of the program, however found that he had put himself into the hands of blackmailers. Armed with the chaplain's signature on articles or on "peace resolutions," the commissar forced his victim further and

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further into conduct that was traitorous both to his religion and to his country by threatening exposure and disgrace at home or punishment in Siberian labor camps. This technique of forcing continued collaboration was used against any prisoner who had thus placed himself in a position where he could be "blackmailed."

C. Indoctrination from the End of the War to Mid-1947

"The Punishment Years"

Upon the capitulation of Germany in May 1945, the Soviets initiated a program of extreme cruelty toward German prisoners. The huge number of German troops who surrendered to the Russians were herded into labor camps to serve as "living reparations." Subjected to overwork, systematic starvation, exposure, and other forms of physical and mental mistreatment, the prisoners died by the thousands. The Germans who survived have referred to this period as "the punishment years." The intensive propaganda program begun late in 1947 had little over-all success, largely because the prisoners could not forget the inhuman subjugation they suffered at the hands of the Soviets.

With the end of the war, the Russians dropped all pretense of desiring a "democratic" Germany. The elite of the German emigree Communists -- Pieck, Ulbrich, Weinert, and others -- were sent to the Soviet Zone of Germany where they were immediately placed in high positions. German officers who had been active in the NKFD and the BdO were left without guidance or instruction.

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Many of the camp emissaries were removed from their positions; others were eventually entrusted with missions in the government of the Eastern Zone of Germany. But the ambitious Seydlitz was not permitted to leave Russia.

The Rise of "Antifa" and the End of the NKFD

With the formation of political parties in Eastern Germany after the collapse of the Nazi regime, Seydlitz dissolved the NKFD and the BdO. This took place in November 1945, with the explanation to the world that the organizations had served their purpose and that the reorganization of the government in Germany was guaranteed by the democratic forces at work there (that is, Eastern Germany). ²³

Even before the dissolution of the officer organizations, the camp "antifa" organization had begun to dominate the scene. During part of the war, thousands of prisoners had been trained in advanced "antifa" schools. For the most part, they were opportunists who used this means to achieve better living conditions, power, and prestige in the camps. Many of them were old Communists, deserters, or former concentration camp inmates -- mostly criminals. They were interested only in promoting their own ends and in gaining favor with the MVD.

The chief of the camp "antifa" organization now became camp commander and took orders only from the appropriate MVD officer. Everyone was subordinated to the camp commander who maintained an effective spy system intended to root out all anti-Communist

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feeling in the camp. All important camp positions (labor captains, interpreters, and police) were staffed with members of the "antifa." The mass of prisoners were completely dominated by the small clique of "antifa" members who lived in comparative luxury while their former comrades starved to death or died from overwork trying to meet impossible work quotas. There were, of course, some camps which were well-managed and in which the camp commander did what he could to protect the prisoners, but these were the exception.

Most of the prisoners recognized the "antifa" members only as traitors and turned from the movement in disgust. Eventually, the Russians realized their mistake and tried to remove the more criminal elements of the "antifa." At the same time, leaders among the anti-Communist block in the camps began to take a more realistic view of the situation and began to force their best men into the "antifa" in order to get rid of the parasites. ²⁴

For nearly two years after the war, the propaganda program was virtually dropped. In a few camps, political meetings were held once or twice a week, and attendance became more and more compulsory. Lectures were occasionally delivered during the noon-lunch recess. Members of the "antifa" usually gave the lectures while the Soviet personnel stayed in the background keeping a close watch over proceedings. The lectures often consisted of "canned" speeches which neither the speaker nor his audience understood, and there were long sessions during which the camp newspaper was read aloud to the assembled prisoners. (The NKPD paper, Free Germany,

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was replaced by a similar sheet published in Moscow, the News for German Prisoners of War in the Soviet Union or (Nachrichten fuer deutsche Kriegsgefangene in der Sowjetunion.) Germany's war-guilt was emphasized as the reason why the prisoners were being held in Germany. Pro-Soviet posters were displayed in the camps along with large pictures of Soviet and German Communist leaders. The bulletin board also played a large part in the propaganda campaign; on it was posted a variety of material, including announcements, schedules, news items of local interest, cartoons, slogans, and short statements by members of the camp. The latter often took the form of anonymous "poison-pen" accusations against "reactionary" prisoners.²⁵

Higher ranking officers were not required to work, but they were often urged to do so. Out of boredom, many officers accepted certain tasks, usually of a clerical nature. When the officers did so, enlisted prisoners were taken from those assignments and put on heavier work details. The Soviets were careful to point out to the prisoners thus discriminated against that their officers were at fault. Resentment was the natural reaction, and a deeper wedge was driven between officer and enlisted prisoners as a result. The officers were unaware, as a rule, that they had offended the enlisted men.

Outright attempts to convert the prisoners to communism seldom took place during the "punishment years;" rather, the emphasis was

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on "world socialism." Diatribes against the Hitler regime were replaced by warnings against the danger of "world fascism," and there was gradually increasing propaganda against Great Britain and the United States. The camp indoctrination program was not very systematic during this period, however, and the Soviets, for the most part, were content with getting as much work out of the prisoners as possible. The combination of overwork, starvation, mistreatment, and fear brought about a state of demoralization which was a propagandistic end to be desired from the Soviet point of view.

"Antifa" Schools after the War

Although the propaganda program was relaxed after the war, the Soviets increased the program of sending selected prisoners to "antifa" schools for advanced training. The hardships endured by prisoners drove more and more of them into the "antifa" organization and, from among these, carefully-screened candidates were sent to school.

In each larger-sized region or district containing from fifty to sixty thousand prisoners, a school was established. Here, from sixty to eighty men were trained for three months to act as subordinate functionaries, first in the camps and subsequently (that is, after repatriation) in Germany.

From among the graduates of the regional schools were selected those to attend one of two "union" schools located at Ogra and

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Moscow. At these schools, university-level courses lasting nine months were attended by 800 to 1,000 men. Soviet politicians, economists, and professors and Germans from corresponding positions in life served as lecturers. The purpose of these schools was to train men firmly indoctrinated with Communist ideology for future service in business management, industrial positions, and public office in the Eastern Zone of Germany. This group was also intended to serve as a reserve force from which leaders obedient to the Soviet could be drawn to take over other parts of Germany -- or of Europe. After repatriation had become more or less complete (in 1949-50), the regional schools were disbanded, but, according to various reports, the two "union" schools have continued to function, presumably for the benefit of functionaries sent from Germany.

Courses in the schools included the usual instruction on Communist ideology -- Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin. History, geography, economics, and other subjects were interpreted in the light of current Communist theory (that is, in line with Stalin's teachings). Methods of carrying on the work in the camps (and eventually in Germany) were also taught in these schools.

D. Indoctrination from Mid-1947 to 1950

Improved Living Conditions

Having committed themselves to the obligation of repatriating prisoners by the end of 1948, the Soviets apparently turned their

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attention once again to the problem of indoctrinating prisoners. The stepped-up program began to make itself obvious by the autumn of 1947. Some former prisoners assert that the Soviets did not complete repatriation by the end of 1948 because the political "re-education" of the prisoners had not progressed satisfactorily, and large numbers of the prisoners were held as late as mid-1950²⁹ in order to make the program effective.

Realizing that ill-treatment, starvation, and overwork alienated rather than won over German prisoners, the Soviets set about improving camp conditions. More food was provided, living conditions improved, clothing was issued, and work quotas were reduced. Those who worked were paid small wages, and with this money they were permitted to buy food and other items on the open market. (This period coincided with the Soviet program of relaxing rationing restrictions and instituting several economic reforms designed to ease the lot of Russian citizens.) Life was still miserable in most of the camps, by western European standards, but it was better than it had been, and the health of most prisoners began to improve.

The "antifa" personnel in the camps underwent a typical Russian purge, and much of the criminal element which had helped to discredit the "educational" program disappeared. The spy-system, however, remained.

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~~SECRET~~ SECURITY INFORMATIONEmphasis on Indoctrination

The improvement of living conditions coincided with an intensification of the propaganda program. Attendance at the political meetings and participation in discussions or activities connected with the program was mandatory. The number of meetings, posters, radio broadcasts, and "demonstrations" increased sharply. Those who tried to avoid participation or who did not evidence enthusiasm were branded as Fascists and suffered various form of punishment, ranging from discrimination in work assignments and rations to confinement in solitary confinement cells. One of the most feared punishments was that of being removed from the list of repatriates.

As mentioned earlier in this study, the Soviets at this time instituted a program of trying and condemning large numbers of prisoners as war criminals. Punishment was usually a long term of imprisonment in a labor camp. Those who refused to participate in the indoctrination program were constantly in danger of being accused of war crimes on trumped-up charges. By retaining such elements in Soviet prison camps, the Soviets prevented the repatriation of many strong-willed anti-Communists who would have been a deterrent to the growth of communism in their native countries if repatriated. The majority of prisoners, therefore, simulated an enthusiasm for Communist ideas and gave an appearance of success to the program. They applauded at meetings, mouthed

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Soviet slogans when called upon, signed resolutions concerning Russo-German friendship, and pledged themselves to carry on Communist activities when repatriated.

Subject Matter of the Propaganda

During the war the propaganda line emphasized was anti-Hitler and anti-Fascist. Immediately after the war, the line changed to the fight against "world fascism," and the program was directed against anything that was not exactly consistent with Soviet ideology. But the Soviets continued to emphasize propaganda against the Wehrmacht because of its attempted aggression of Russia and its atrocities against "the peace-loving Russian population." The theme of atonement through the physical labor of the prisoners was played up in all its exaggerated variations and used to justify the slave labor program.

One theme which was never dropped was excessive glorification of the Soviet Union: its accomplishments, its leaders, its scientists, artists, and economists. The Soviet Union, because of its unique system and ideology, was the sole guarantor of world peace.

Another phase of the indoctrination program which was basic to the whole scheme was intensive schooling on the theory, history, and practice of Marxism as modified and improved by Lenin and Stalin. The theory behind this type of propaganda, apparently, was that to know and understand was to believe and accept. In other words, the object of the program was to convert all prisoners to communism.

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This object became more apparent as the program continued. The seeming indirection of earlier phases of the program were merely camouflaged approaches to the real objective.

Late in 1947, the program was completely overhauled, and the line, so far as the attitude toward Germany was concerned, was changed. Suddenly, Germany was no longer the bogeyman; the West was to blame for everything that was wrong with the world. Germany was but a poor victim to be exploited by America and England. The Berlin blockade and the airlift was the signal for a wild outburst of hate-filled propaganda against those two western powers.³⁰

On the whole, the program consisted of a primitive form of "black and white" propaganda. Everything which happened in the West was wrong and bad; everything emanating from the Soviet Union was right and good. In the West, people died of starvation and the economy was at the point of collapse; in the Soviet Union everything needful was abundantly available and miracles were being accomplished in organization, economic, and cultural fields. The statesmen of the West were crooks and idiots; the Soviet Union was possessed of "one statesman, the benevolent, intelligent, outstanding father of all workers: Stalin!"³¹

The basic themes of the propaganda program were comparatively simple, but the variations in the manner in which they were presented were extremely complex. Prisoners were exposed to a great mass of subject matter; the media of presentation included

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practically all known devices used for conveying ideas -- private conversations; public addresses, conferences, debates, newspapers, tracts, posters, books, the radio, and motion pictures.

An underlying fault of the Soviet program was that it did not take into account the German desire for objectivity. The exaggerated claims made by the propagandists not only met with secret disbelief (no one dared to disagree openly), but they also aroused derision. Information leaked into the camps from the outside world, and whispering campaigns disseminated statistics about true conditions, both in Russia and in Germany. The principal fault of the program was the obvious discrepancy between the theories that were preached and the actual practice which existed in the camps. Corruption, waste, inefficiency, nepotism, bureaucracy, and other defects of the Communist system in Russia were observed daily by even the most undiscerning prisoners and were effective counter-arguments against acceptance of Soviet ideology.

Many prisoners who finally came to believe much of what they were told about the conditions in Germany which had been brought about by American and British oppression needed but a few hours at home after repatriation to learn how wrongly they were and to lose their faith in any part of communism.

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E. Soviet Methods of Control

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According to a former German officer, the Soviets have used essentially the same methods with prisoners of war that they have used to gain control over the population of the Soviet Union and its satellites. The methods fall into five general categories: starvation, constant maintenance of a state of fluctuation between hope and fear, the judicial system, propaganda, and political demoralization. [Since these methods have already been discussed in some length in connection with the indoctrination system, only a brief summary is presented here.]

Starvation

The rigid control of food rationing has been one of the most significant features of the rise of the Soviet regime in Russia. The Soviets have always been able to export large quantities of food in payment for industrial and military materials from other countries even while the Russian people were being exhorted to tighten their belts because of shortages. By creating an artificial shortage of food through rationing, Soviet leaders have been able to swing a double-edged sword of propaganda: at the farm workers for not producing as much as they should and at the "capitalist" nations who were responsible for the hardships the Russians must endure. In the late 1940's, when food rations were increased and many food items were permitted on the open market, Soviet leaders used this opportunity to point out to the masses

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that the superiority of the Soviet system over other cultures was responsible for the benefits now being enjoyed by the Russians. For many years, Soviet propagandists have told the Russian people that the common people of the capitalist countries were gradually starving to death.

Practically all prisoners who have been repatriated from the Soviet Union have spoken with horror of the systematic starvation which they suffered. One of the most feared punishments was to have rations reduced, and the offer of the slightest increase in rations as an incentive for increased production was enough to drive the men beyond the limit of their physical endurance. By systematic starvation, the mass of prisoners were quickly demoralized. For the sake of pitifully small increases in food, men would become stool pigeons, betray their comrades, and turn against their country or their religion. One of the chief incentives to join the "antifa" was the prospect of a comparatively luxurious food ration.

Constant Maintenance of a State of Fluctuation Between
Hope and Fear

The dictatorship of the Communist party in Russia was achieved by a small group largely through the use of the weapon of fear. Fear is prevalent throughout Russia: from the highest leaders in the Soviet regime to the lowest slave in a labor camp, the Russians are afraid for their lives. And fear, like hunger, is demoralizing.

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It becomes more demoralizing when a man, because of promises, begins to hope for better conditions, only to have those hopes dashed to despair.

Prisoners of war were constantly promised better living conditions, but the promises were almost always broken and the period of hope was replaced by despair and fear. The principal field in which this tactic was used was in the matter of repatriation. A date would be set for the repatriation of a group, but the prisoner would remain in camp past the date with no mention of the matter nor any explanations being made. Another date would be sent and the men assembled to depart; there at the last moment (or after they were actually on their way), a portion of the group would be taken off the shipment and returned to camp.

The Judicial System

The judicial system of the Soviet Union has achieved much attention from the world at large because of the "purge" trials of politically prominent individuals, both in Russia and its satellites. It would seem that the accused in Russia are not brought to trial unless they have already been adjudged guilty. The trial itself is merely a hearing in which the crimes of the guilty are made public and the sentence pronounced although the Soviets use forms of judicial procedure common to the West and make a great pretense of using "democratic" methods.

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This latter fact was true in the prisoner-of-war camps where thousands of prisoners were formally charged with war crimes, tried, and almost always pronounced guilty. The prisoner had been forced to make a "confession" before the trial, or else other prisoners were suborned or forced to testify against him. "Reactionary" elements among the prisoners, that is, those who refused to cooperate in the indoctrination program, were singled out to remain in the Soviet Union. By trying these prisoners on trumped-up charges, the Soviets gave a legal aspect to the retention of large numbers of prisoners as slave laborers. Thus, the judicial system at work in the prisoner-of-war camps was a device used to exercise control.

Propaganda

The use which Soviet leaders have made of propaganda in their rise to power is too well-known to require elaboration here. And the use of propaganda in relation to prisoners of war has already been discussed at great length in this study.

Political Demoralization

Political demoralization is more the result of other methods of control than it is a method in itself. This particular type of demoralization, however, was a specific object of the indoctrination program. The classic tactic is to seize upon dissatisfied or abused minorities of a national group and use them to help

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destroy the group as a whole. This was demonstrated in the recruiting of members for the NKFD. Also included in the political demoralization method is the technique of the "lying promise." The Soviets promise anything and everything to achieve their ends. The tools of their achievement (those who have been duped into serving) are ruthlessly discarded once they have outlived their purpose.

F. Conclusions

According to certain Germans who have returned from years of imprisonment in Russia, the average German who landed in a prison camp was a man without a reference point. He no longer knew where he belonged, religiously or ethically, intellectually culturally, politically or economically. Consequently, it was not difficult for the political commissars to demoralize these individuals, both politically and spiritually -- "to reduce them to a pulp" as some Germans have expressed it. But when German prisoners saw the practical result of the philosophy of materialism carried to its last logical conclusion, many rejected the Communist doctrine and turned again to the old ideals.

Perhaps the most significant conclusion that may be gathered from this study (and one which is certainly not original) is that the leaders of the Soviet Union are determined to dominate the rest of the world. The use of prisoners of war to extend the Soviet

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political system is but one phase of this program. World War II gave the Russians an opportunity to select and train comparatively small groups of individuals from several nations. These groups of fanatic, highly-trained, and well-organized individuals constitute a threat to the security of the nations to which they have been repatriated. This threat cannot be ignored.

All present-day soldiers are potential prisoners of the Soviet Union and should be taught what to expect if they fall into the hands of the Soviets. Armed with the knowledge of the uses to which prisoners have been put in the past, they may be less susceptible to Soviet propaganda and promises. At the same time, nations receiving back prisoners from the Soviet Union should take extra precautions to screen them carefully and to keep a close watch on those with whom the Communists may have had a semblance of success.

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CHAPTER VI
INDOCTRINATION OF JAPANESE
PRISONERS OF WAR

A. Living Conditions in Camps for Japanese Prisoners

In the course of the eleven-day war between the Soviet Union and Japan which began on 8 August 1945, nearly a million and a half Japanese soldiers and civilians stationed or living in Asia and Sakhalin Island fell into the hands of the Far Eastern Forces of the Red Army. ¹ These prisoners were immediately sent to prison camps, largely in Siberia, where they were forced to perform work of the hardest kind -- lumbering, construction, mining. More than eight hundred camps where Japanese prisoners were held have been identified.

It would seem that the Russians were not prepared to handle such a large number of prisoners, and the lack of food, shelter, clothing, medicine, and proper transportation combined with the severe weather conditions in Siberia, hard labor, and poor sanitation ² resulted in a high death rate among the prisoners. They were made to work from eight to eighteen hours a day in order to meet the unreasonable demands of the quota system. Even the injured and sick were made to work. Guards and foremen were harsh, and beatings were frequent. The billets were crowded, unsanitary, and unheated; contagious diseases, exposure, and overwork took a ³ heavy toll of prisoners the first few months after the war.

~~SECRET~~ SECURITY INFORMATIONB. Phases of the Indoctrination Program

The indoctrination of Japanese prisoners passed through at least four stages between 1945 and 1950. From August 1945 until about March 1946, very little, if any, indoctrination took place. During those eight months, the prisoners underwent hardships similar to those endured by German prisoners who were at that time going through the so-called "punishment years." By the time the Soviets opened their indoctrination campaign in March 1946, the Japanese had reached a state bordering on prostration. The shock of losing the war and the hardships endured during the Siberian winter had gone far toward "reducing them to a pulp" as the Germans have expressed it.

The First Indoctrination Period -- March-December 1946

The first stage of the indoctrination program was a negative phase designed to eradicate the long-standing hatred between the Japanese and the Russians and to abolish "emperor worship" and the military caste system peculiar to Japan.⁴

In March 1946, the camp commissars opened their indoctrination program by launching a membership drive for an anti-Fascist group known as the Friends' Society (Tomono Kai). An appeal was made to all prisoners interested in political and social problems to join this group and hold discussions. So few responded that the strategy was changed and an attempt was made to improve camp conditions in

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an effort to gain a more receptive attitude on the part of the prisoners. In some camps, real progress was made in alleviating the miserable conditions which existed, but this was the exception rather than the rule.

In May 1946, the commissars began their offensive against the Emperor and the military caste systems, which the Soviets considered the most important obstacles to a proletarian revolution in Japan. Japanese officers, who had until this time been segregated, were now mixed with the rank and file of prisoners, and large numbers of them were singled out for prosecution as alleged war criminals. The Japan News (Nihon Shimbun), a propaganda news organ published in Khabarovsk and distributed throughout the camps, published inflammatory articles and editorials blaming the Emperor and the Army hierarchy for the unhappy lot of the prisoners. The Friends' Society plastered the camps with posters and banners bearing such slogans as "Destroy the Officers' Privileges," "Better Living Conditions for Enlisted Prisoners," and "Down with the Emperor System."

Japanese enlisted prisoners, freed from the control of their officers and spurred by agitators, got completely out of hand when given a chance to have a voice in their own camp government. Something approaching wholesale mutiny spread through the camps. Officers were insulted and forced to submit to many indignities. Most of them were forced out of the executive positions which they

held in the camps by virtue of their rank. At the suggestion of the Soviets, and urged by the Japan News, camp elections were held which resulted in the selection of rowdy and illiterate elements for positions of leadership in the camp prisoner organization.

Attacks on the emperor system continued, and the propaganda began to emphasize the Soviet state as an ideal form of government. At the same time, the propaganda began to include diatribes against United States' policy in occupied Japan and against the "reactionary" Yoshida Government. Lurid stories were circulated about the abuses heaped on the Japanese people by the occupational force in an effort to discredit the United States in the eyes of the prisoners.

The Friends' Society (Tomono Kai)

The Friends' Society was formed around a hard core of Japanese prisoners who had thrown in their lot with the Soviets, many of them having been Communists before their capture. They received special training to enable them to carry on their activities and enjoyed superior living conditions. Members were recruited from the ranks of the prisoners by much the same methods used in organizing the "antifa" groups in German camps. In fact, the two organizations served the same purposes for their respective nationalities and were used as a front by the Soviets to carry on as much of the indoctrination program as possible.

The work of the Friends' Society was performed by a camp committee which, in turn, comprised an editorial board and drama, welfare, propaganda, sports, and labor committees. The editorial

board translated Soviet propaganda into Japanese and published wall newspapers, banners, and posters. The labor committee supervised the work of prisoners and used various means of compulsion to achieve the work quotas. The other committees carried on activities appropriate to their titles and endeavored to give the program the appearance of a spontaneous popular movement among the prisoners.

Membership in the Friends' Society was voluntary at first, but the majority of the overworked, discouraged prisoners were not interested. Most of those who joined were opportunists who hoped to receive more favorable treatment. Reprisals and threats of non-repatriation resulted in a great increase in membership. Eventually, at least 60 per cent of the prisoners had enrolled in the organization.

The Second Indoctrination Period -- January-April 1947

Having undermined the moral structure of the prisoners by discrediting the Emperor and the military caste systems, the Soviets now began the systematic teaching of theoretical communism, replacing old loyalties with new ideas. The program was designed to single out the intelligentsia from the ranks and give them special training.

In the spring of 1947, a Secretary Bureau (Shoki Kyoku) was organized composed entirely of Japanese Communists who were charged

adapting and implementing Soviet political policy in the Japanese
prisoner-of-war camps. ⁷ This group evolved a program of instruction
called the Short Courses (Koshu Kai) which covered such subjects as
theoretical communism, labor unions and the class struggle, compar-
isons of Soviet and United States post-war policy, and the history
of the Communist party.

The "Short Courses" were introduced into every prisoner-of-war
district. Carefully selected prisoners were excused from manual
labor and sent to school where they had to maintain high academic
standards. The organization which published the Japan News furnished
the subject matter for the courses in the form of pamphlets, posters,
charts, feature articles in the newspaper, and controlled discussion
topics. The "Short Courses" lasted from two weeks to a month, and
the classes averaged about thirty students each. Members of the
Secretary Bureau toured the camps to report on the progress of
the program.

A typical "Short Course" in history covered the following
general topics: (1) International Situation; (2) National Structure
of the USSR; (3) Stalin Five-Year Plan; (4) Situation in Japan; (5)
Differences between U.S. Bourgeois Democracy and U.S.S.R. Proletarian
Democracy; (6) Lenin and Stalin; (7) Japanese Imperialistic Aggres-
sion Against the USSR; (8) How Japanese Prisoners Must Work to
Compensate for War Damages; (9) World Problems; and (10) Miscellaneous.
The final item covered a wide variety of subjects such as the causes

of war labor practices in the USSR, the Red Army, and critique of the Emperor system. The subjects were presented in lectures followed by discussion periods, and some outside study was required. The studies were obviously designed to appeal to the intelligentsia among the prisoners rather than to the rank and file soldiers.

During the second phase, the name of the Friends' Society was changed to Democratic Group (Minshu), and its activities became more political and less ostensibly social. Up to this point, a residue of mistrust for communism had existed among the prisoners, and the Soviets avoided the use of the word "communism," substituting for it the more acceptable word "democracy." Later, as ill-feeling developed between the Soviet Union and the United States, the Soviets dropped all euphemisms and bluntly named the movement communism.

The Third Indoctrination Period -- May-September 1947

The third stage of the indoctrination program consisted of an intensification of the propaganda against the "imperialistic" policies of the United States in Japan. The mild approach to communistic theory of the second phase now gave way to a direct attempt to convince the prisoners that their only salvation lay in an alliance with the Soviet Union. All prisoners were urged to join the Communist movement in preparation for a proletarian revolution in Japan.

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The emphasis upon the political indoctrination program resulted in longer periods of time spent in political meetings and study which resulted in a decreased labor output. The discord between those responsible for labor production and for political indoctrination reached such proportions that orders from higher headquarters were finally issued demanding that labor and political activities be co-ordinated. The political indoctrination leaders were in the ascendancy at the conference which was called, but the practical necessity for labor output resulted in a compromise in which repatriation was made dependent upon production, and the political side of the controversy was placated by the creation of special research groups (Kenkyu-Kai) in the camps. It was decided to hold regular conferences at about three month intervals which would be attended by political officers from all districts as well as by prisoner representatives of the Outstanding Workers' Group (Harasho-Rubatai). Attempts were to be made to stimulate both production and indoctrination programs.

The Fourth Indoctrination Period -- September 1947 through 1949

The fourth stage of the indoctrination program was marked by an intensification of effort to accomplish the aims already mentioned. At the beginning of the period, continued hardships and delays in repatriation had resulted in an apathy to the indoctrination program amounting to outright resistance in many instances.

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The insatiable demand for labor production never ceased, but in 1948 the pressure began to abate to a certain extent. Camp conditions were improved and workers who completed more than 100 per cent of their quotas were rewarded with food and money. Actual improvement in the lot of the prisoners was slight, but the Soviets exploited any improvement to its full propaganda value.

The Youth Organizations

A feature of the final indoctrination period was the use of so-called youth organizations to further the aims of the indoctrination program. The Soviet authorities adopted a method which seems peculiar to Japanese behavior and which was evidenced in the rise of the military clique in Japan in the early 1930's -- that of using raw, turbulent youths to eliminate conservative elements.

Membership in the youth organizations was limited to prisoners under thirty years of age. Members were given special privileges in the form of improved living conditions and positions of power and prestige in the camps to encourage their activities. These groups were formed into political organizations during the summer of 1947. A fraternal society or "blood brotherhood" atmosphere was maintained by a ruling that new members must be sponsored by others within the group. The names of the organizations varied from camp to camp, but their aims and methods were identical. Typical names were the Youth Action Corps, the Assault Corps, or the Young Communist League.

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The declared purpose of the youth organizations was to stimulate interest in the indoctrination program and to increase labor output. In addition to these purposes, however, the members acted as spies throughout the camps and were intended to form the nucleus of a strong Communist movement in Japan after their repatriation. In the camps, the organizations carried on a running feud with conservative elements, and, backed by the authorities, used terroristic or gangster methods to maintain control over the other prisoners.

In camps where the indoctrination program was well advanced, the youth leaders were given limited judicial powers over other prisoners. Prisoners who failed to co-operate in the indoctrination or labor programs were summarily tried and punished by so-called General Assembly Courts (Tai Shu Kanpa). "Kangaroo court" methods were followed in the trial of "Communist slackers" or "decadent bourgeois" elements in the camp. The trials were held in the open before crowds of prisoners who were whipped into a frenzy by members of the youth organization. The least punishment a culprit could expect was to have to sign a pledge to help overthrow the emperor system and fight for a Communist government in Japan. At worst, the mob would take matters into its own hands and the culprit would be lynched on the spot.

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~~SECRET~~ ~~SECURITY INFORMATION~~Judicial Methods of Control

The Soviets used courts (other than the "Kangaroo Courts") to punish Japanese prisoners in the same manner they used them in camps for German prisoners. Large numbers of the recalcitrant elements, the intelligentsia, and higher-ranking prisoners who could be expected to resist communism in Japan if repatriated were accused of war crimes on trumped-up charges and were committed to long terms of imprisonment in forced labor units and correction battalions. Minor offenders were sentenced to short terms in detention barracks, a feature of every camp. Political and group leaders were permitted to impose sentences of solitary confinement or short terms in the detention barracks on prisoners who failed to salute group leaders, clean their barracks, or otherwise obey camp rules.

Advanced Training Schools for Prisoners

The system of schools for the advanced training of selected Japanese prisoners was so similar to the "antifa" school system described in the chapter on German prisoners that no further discussion will be presented here. On the higher levels, the school systems for various nationalities overlapped, and, insofar as language difficulties could be overcome, courses were often attended jointly by prisoners of several different nationalities.

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Repatriation Port Activities

All Japanese prisoners had to undergo a final period of intensive indoctrination at the port of Nakhodka before embarking for Japan. The prisoners termed this final period as the "finishing school," and fear of non-repatriation was so great that practically all prisoners simulated great enthusiasm for communism both on the way to the port and at the port itself in order to ensure their repatriation to Japan. Slogans were shouted in chorus at the slightest signal from a leader and revolutionary songs were sung lustily at every opportunity to convince Soviet leaders (and the Japanese spies scattered among the prisoners) that they were confirmed communists.

Carefully organized screening systems were instituted at Nakhodka to determine whether the individual prisoners were "ready" for repatriation. Agitation and propaganda squads, investigation groups, and the local Youth Action Corps made up the political organization of the port. All the techniques of mob psychology were used to stir up a frenzy of enthusiasm among the prisoners. Mass demonstrations, the passing of resolutions, and the individual pledging of each prisoner to participate in the Japanese Communist movement were features of the final ceremonies before the prisoners embarked for Japan. In 1949, when repatriation was nearing its close and the more fanatic elements among the prisoners were finally returning to Japan, the

effectiveness of the indoctrination program was evidenced by several incidents of mutiny against American and Japanese authorities¹¹ by boatloads of repatriates upon their arrival in Japanese ports.

C. Conclusions

The basic methods of control used by the Soviets with German prisoners were adopted and applied to Japanese prisoners. The first object of the program was to demoralize completely the prisoners -- mentally, morally, and spiritually -- and then mold them by means of starvation, coercion, and propaganda into tools of Soviet imperialism in Japan. The weakness of the program lay in the discrepancy between the ideals promulgated by the Soviets and the actual conditions (in Japan as well as Russia) observed by the prisoners.

By means of their program, the Soviets have succeeded in placing a small nucleus of Communist leaders in Japan which may eventually succeed in bringing about a Soviet-type revolution unless stringent measures are taken to keep it in check. Of equal importance is the necessity of preventing the rise of political and economic unrest in Japan which may make it possible for a small, well-organized group such as the Communists to seize power and dominate national policy.

Explanatory Note

Much of this study is based upon a series of papers prepared by a group of former German officers working under the supervision of the Chief of the Historical Division, European Command (EUCOM). Several of the individuals participating in the project had been prisoners of the Soviets; numerous repatriated Germans who had been prisoners of the Soviets were also interviewed in the course of preparing the studies. These separate papers are designated in the citations that follow under their code number, MS P-018 (a through f). Copies of these papers are on file in the Office of the Chief of Military History.

The other main sources of information were the Departmental Records Branch, Office of the Adjutant General, and the G-2 Document Library, GSUSA. Unless otherwise specified in the following notes, all German records were obtained from the former source; all others are on file with G-2. Other documents have been secured from Air Force Intelligence, Naval Intelligence, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Counterintelligence Corps.

The organization of the Red Army and of Soviet intelligence agencies as described, is based principally on two publications of G-2, GSUSA: Survey of Soviet Intelligence and Counterintelligence and WD TM 30-430, Handbook on USSR Military Forces (1945).

The classification of each document used is indicated the first time it is cited by the symbols (R), (C), (S), and (TS) -- Restricted, Confidential, Secret, and Top Secret respectively. Only a few Top Secret documents have been cited, usually for the purpose of supporting information secured from less highly classified documents.

NOTES

Chapter I

1. The period covered is from June 1941, the beginning of the war between Germany and Russia, through early 1950, at which time the Soviet Union announced the completion of their prisoner-of-war repatriation program. On 22 April 1950, the official Soviet news agency, TASS, announced that all Japanese prisoners of war had been repatriated from the USSR; a similar announcement regarding German prisoners was made on 4 May 1950. In both instances, the Soviets admitted to holding back numbers of individuals convicted of, or being investigated for, war crimes; they have failed to account for thousands of others listed as missing and who were believed to have been captured by the Soviets.

2. Charles R. Joy (trans.), Helmut M. Fehling's One Great Prison (Boston, 1951). Part II of this book consists of documents and official announcements concerning Japanese and German war prisoners compiled by Charles R. Joy. The documents concerning numbers of prisoners quoted in the text may be found in this reference, pp. 93, 136, 138, 157-60, and 173.

3. Ibid., p. 157

4. Special Report, GHQ, FEC, Mil. Intel. Sec., Gen. Staff, Jan 50. "Japanese Prisoners of War, Life and Death in Soviet PW Camps." This report contains a complete discussion of the wide discrepancy

between Soviet and Japanese figures concerning the number of Japanese held prisoners in the USSR.

5. Joy, One Great Prison, p. 173.

6. (1) MS P-018e, Appendix 2; (2) Annex to Rpt, dtd 6 Feb 50, in MS D-387. This MS, as well as MS K-388, constitute a collection of studies, reports, letters, and appeals pertaining to the indoctrination, interrogation, trial, and treatment of German PW's in Russia during the post-war period, in documentation of the MS P-018 series. See especially the Appeal to the Federate Government at Bonn included in MS D-387.

Chapter II

1. David J. Dallin, Russia and Postwar Europe (New Haven, 1945), p. 73. This reference contains an excellent dissertation on changing Soviet theory affecting the relations of the Soviet Union with other states.
2. George Vernadsky, Political and Diplomatic History of Russia (Boston, 1939), pp. 434-36, 442.
3. T. A. Taracouzio, The Soviet Union and International Law (New York, 1935), pp. 7ff. Marxian theory concerning the relations of the Soviet Union with other states is delineated in this reference.
4. Dallin, op. cit., pp. 3-5.
5. Ibid., p. 74.
6. MS P-018c, pp. 30-33.

Chapter III

1. (1) GMDS RS 279. For an English translation of this document see: CIA Document OO-W-1009, (C), pp. 8-20. (2) An extensive discussion of these instructions and of other aspects of evacuation may be found in: Maj. Kermit G. Stewart, "Russian Methods of Interrogating Captured Personnel, World War II" (Special Studies Series, OCMH), (S) Chs VII and X and Chart No. 1 facing p. 68.
2. GMDS OKW File on PW Affairs, E 2, 5, 7, 8, Heeresarchiv Potsdam Sg.: 70/No. 33713. German translation of Russian order dtd 10 Mar 42. This order, confirming an order of 1 Jul 41, indicated that in the early stages of the war prisoners needed for interrogation by higher military intelligence agencies would not be transferred to the NKVD until the army was finished with them.
3. (1) WD TM 30-430, I-26; (2) Stewart, op. cit., pp. 104-7.
4. WD TM 30-430, I-4, 5.
5. (1) Stewart, op. cit., Ch VII; (2) OKW File on PW Affairs E 2, 5, 7, 8, Heeresarchiv Potsdam Sg.: 70/33713. This file contains conflicting documents on the matter of the killing of German prisoners during the early months of the war. The Soviet high command apparently issued no universal order regarding prisoner treatment during this period.

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6. GMDS German Survey Foreign Armies East, H/3/682, 2 Jan 43.

This document, an order issued by the Deputy Commissar of Defense reviewed the appalling conditions under which German prisoners were being evacuated and ordered measures to be taken to ensure healthful conditions during evacuation. The stated objective of the order was to preserve the strength and lives of prisoners so they could be utilized as laborers.

7. Taracouzio, op. cit., p. 329.

8. OKW File on PW Affairs E 2, 5, 7, 8, Heeresarchiv Potsdam
Sg.: 70/No. 33713. Soviet order dtd 14 Jul 41; (German translation dtd 14 Sep 41.

9. GMDS Document file, Army Group North, Beutebefehle, Ic/AO,
15.IX.41 - 2.I.43. For a translation of this document see:
Stewart, op. cit., Appendix III.

10. MS P-018c, Sec. II, 6.

11. MS P-018f, Sec VI.

12. (1) CIC Doc, "Soviet Agents Security," pp. 10, 24. (2)
Interr. Rpt., EUCOM ID, 12 Apr 49, Sub: MGB Operational
Techniques (TS). An excerpt from this document may be found
in Stewart, op. cit., Appendix VI, Item 13.

13. GMDS Interrogation Reports, Pt. IV, dtd 10 Sep 43, found
in G-2 file of Ninth Army Anlage 5 zum Taetigkeitsbericht der
Abt Ic/AO, 18.VIII.-31.XII.43. This document contains a summary
of the content of Stalin Order 171, dtd 8 Jul 43. At this writing,
no exact copy of the order has been discovered in available files.

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14. Joy, op. cit., pp. 7-15.
15. Ibid.
16. (1) GMDS #36 056/23, 27th Corps, 31 Mar 43; (2) GMDS #28 071/10, 29th Inf Div, 20 Jan 43; (3) GMDS #30 153/7, 67th Inf Div, 22 Jan 43; (4) GMDS #37 539/4, 102d Inf Div, 9 Aug 43. Excerpts from these documents appear in Stewart, op. cit., ap. VI, Items 6, 9, 10, and 11 respectively.

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Chapter IV

1. (1) WD TM 30-430, IV-4ff; (2) Survey of Sov Int, pp. 59-61.
2. In 1943, the NKVD lost its surveillance functions over the civil population and the Red Army. Its Main Directorate of State Security (GUGB) became a commissariat (NKGB), and the Special Sections (OO NKVD) became Red Army counterintelligence (GUKR NKO Smersh). The NKGB worked closely with the NKVD, however, and the changes were just "paper" changes so far as the average Russian was concerned. The NKGB operated a number of prisons for political criminals, but the labor camp system stayed under the NKVD.
3. (1) GHQ, FEC, MIS, ATIS Interrogation Report No. 60, 29 Oct 48, (S), pp. 38ff; (2) WDGS Int Rpt No. RT-194-50 (CI-896), 21 Feb 50, (S), Sub: Administration of PW Affairs by the MVD; (3) Stewart, op. cit., pp. 111ff., 360 ff, and Organizational Charts Nos. 6 and 7.
4. GHQ, FEC, MIS, ATIS Interrogation Report No. 60, 29 Oct 48, (S), pp. 38ff.
5. Since Japanese prisoners were largely interned in the vast areas of Siberia, it is possible that the Soviets added an intermediate echelon of command at the republic level as a practical solution of communication and control problems. Shorter distances and better communications with Moscow may have made unnecessary the intermediate echelon in western Russia where a majority of camps for Germans were located.

6. GMDS 40 935/27, 17th Army on the Crimea (German), 16 Dec 43.
7. The practice of having a prisoner organization to assist the camp commander in camp administrative matters is common to the handling of prisoners by most nations and is provided for in the Geneva Conventions concerning prisoners of war.
8. In English usage, the title "commissar" has been applied loosely to political leaders in the Soviet Union from the lowest to the highest levels of government. The title (that is, its equivalent in Russian) is much less used in the USSR. Since most returnees from Soviet prison camps have referred to the Chief of the NKVD assigned to each camp as a "political commissar," the designation has been retained in this study.
9. MS P-018c (Appendix entitled "Camp Group: Cherepovets-Kryasovets," p. 61.) The camp commander was a member of the NKVD as was the political commissar, but the former was assigned to the Escort and Convoy Troops which performed police and military duties only and which was apparently subordinate to other more strictly political branches of the NKVD.
10. Ibid.
11. MS P-018e, App. 1, pp. 30-34.
12. MS P-018e, Preface.
13. 7707 EUCOM IC, Rpt No. RT-60-49 PI-556, dtd 24 Jan 49, (S), Sub: Treatment of German PWs. . ." (information dtd Nov 43), Sec 3.

14. Konrad Heiden, "Why They Confess," Life Magazine
(20 Jan 49), pp. 92ff.

15. This discussion of prison-camp conditions will not be
footnoted except where specific facts require documentation.

The following documents, articles, and books are the principal
sources upon which this discussion is based: (1) MS P-018b, c
and e; (2) Team 6, 7020 AF CI Unit, USAFE, Rpt No. 6-137-0250,
(S), 8 Feb 50; (3) Team 10, 7020 AF CI Units, Rpt No. 10-148-0250,
(S), 6 Feb 50; (4) Team 12, OSI, IG, USAFE, Rpt No. 12-199-0250,
(S), 20 Feb 50; (5) Team 15, 7020 AF CI Unit, USAFE, Rpt No. 15-179-
0250, (S), 14 Feb 50; (6) 7001st AISS, USAFE, sub: Soviet Treat-
ment of German PWs, (S), 12 Dec 49; (7) Mil Att, Iran, Rpt No.
R-32-47, (S), Mar 47; (8) U.S. Nav Att, Moscow Area, (R), 25 Sep
46, p. 2; (9) BID Doc #331073, sub: Conditions of Release for
Officer and Nazi Internees . . . in USSR, Berlin, (C), 24 Dec 46;
(10) Hq EUCOM IC, Rpt #RT-60-49 (PI-556); (11) 7001 AISS-USAFE,
Rpt No. 10-172-1, (S), 10 Jan 50; (12) Hans Rebach, "Gemordet
Wurdenachts" ("Murders Took Place at Night"), Der Spiegel,
23 May 51; (13) Joy, op. cit., Part I; (14) GHQ, FEC, MIS ATIS
Interrogation Report No. 60, 29 Oct 48, (S).

16. MS P-018e, App. 1, Sec. 1 and 2. It is well to keep in
mind that German treatment of Russian prisoners, Nazi treatment
of political offenders and Jews in concentration camps, and the
German forced-labor program which resulted in the transporting

of hundreds of thousands of Russian men, women, and children to Germany are matters which German writers are inclined to ignore when discussing Russian treatment of prisoners of war. Japanese treatment of prisoners, likewise, was not in keeping with enlightened western practice.

17. (1) GHQ, FEC, Mil Intel. Sec., Special Report, sub: Life and Death in Soviet PW Camps, undated, released about 1 Feb 50⁷;
(2) MS P-018e, App. 7 ("Disabilities of Repatriated German prisoners from Russia").

The first prisoners to be repatriated from Russia were sick, aged, or otherwise incapacitated individuals who were useless as laborers. The last to be repatriated were, on the whole, in much better health and included many who had attended the advanced schools for indoctrination.

18. At sporadic intervals during the war, prisoners were permitted to send and receive mail, but no consistent plan was followed by the Soviets. The International Committee of the Red Cross made repeated but ineffectual efforts to secure the co-operation of the Soviet Government in this matter. See: Report of the International Committee of the Red Cross on its Activities during the Second World War, Sept 1939 - June 1947 (Geneva, May 48), I. pp. 430ff.

19. MS P-018e, App. 1, p. 32

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20. Class five prisoners were designated on the Soviet lists by the initials "OK." Apparently, these letters stood for Osdorowitielnaja Komanda, translated in German documents as Genesendenkommando and meaning "convalescent detail." Some German prisoners assumed erroneously, but logically, that "OK" stood for Ohne Kraft -- "without strength."

21. Team 10, 7020 AF CI Unit, Rpt No. 10-148-0250, 6 Feb 50.

22. (1) Joy, op. cit.; (2) MS P-018e, App. 3, p.151

23. MS P-018e, Ch. II.

24. (1) MS P-018e, App. 6; (2) Stewart, op. cit., pp. 332-44.

25. MS P-018e, App. 7. This appendix has been reproduced as a separate study: Hist Div, EUCOM, "Disabilities of Repatriated Prisoners from Russia" ("Foreign Military Studies," Vol I, No. 4 ✓R - Security Information⁷, 1951).

26. Ibid.

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Chapter V

1. Most of the information on which this part of the study is based may be found in the following sources: (1) MS P-018c, pp. 11-19, 24-25, 35-36, 78; (2) Hq Eighth Sv Cmd ASF, Int Rpt, sub: Russian Education of German Prisoners of War, (C), 9 Mar 45; (3) Hq EUCOM IC, Rpt No. RT-624-48 (PI-581), "History of the NKFD and BdO," (S), [Source was (Former) Maj Gen Walter Paul Schreiber (Medical Corps, German Army)].
2. MS P-018c, pp. 35-36.
3. Ibid., p. 37.
4. Study, Deutsche Kriegsgefangene in der Sowjet-Union in Anti-Komintern File EAP-116/95, Oct 43 (hereafter referred to as Anti-Komintern File EAP-116/95). This reference contains a long list of German Communists with short biographical sketches in many instances. Among the names are those of Beier, Bierwerth, Fleschner, Glodschey, Meisner, Melchoir, Reyher, Scholle, Storz, Vielguth, Wolff, Zittel, and Weinert. Three of these were listed as former Communists, two as politically unreliable (from the Nazi point of view), five as having no political background, and three as having Nazi convictions.
5. Ibid.
6. In some instances, at least, indoctrination of prisoners did not begin until the late winter, that is, early in 1942.

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7. Hq Eighth Sv Cmd ASF, Int Rpt, sub: Russian Education of German Prisoner of War, (C), 9 Mar 45.
8. Hq EUCOM IC, Rpt No. RT-624-48 (PI-581), History of the NKFD and BdO, (S).
9. Anti-Komintern File EAP-116/95.
10. Ibid.
11. MS P-018e, p. 38.
12. This section of the study is largely based on the following references: (1) Anti-Komintern File EAP-116/95; (2) MS P-018c, pp. 38ff; (3) MS P-018e, pp. 84ff; (4) EUCOM IC, RT-629-48 (PI-581), "History of the NKFD . . ." (S), 23 Nov 48.
13. DA Pamphlet 20-234, "Operations of Encircled Forces," (R), Feb 52, p. 23.
14. MS P-018e, p. 86.
15. Ibid.
16. Incomplete lists of the members of the NKFD may be found in (1) Anti-Komintern File EAP-116/95; (2) EUCOM IC, RT-629-48
17. EUCOM IC, RT-629-48 (PI-581). This reference includes an incomplete list of members of the Steering Committee of the BdO.
18. MS P-018e, pp. 90-92.
19. MS P-018e, pp. 92-94.
20. EUCOM IC, RT-629-48 (PI-581).
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. EUCOM IC, RT-629-48 (PI-581), "History of the NKFD."

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24. P-018c, pp. 46ff.
25. P-018e, pp. 139ff.
26. Ibid., pp. 142-43.
27. Ibid. Conflicting reports on the regional schools indicate that some of the lower level schools may have had courses lasting from four to six months. Most reports mention three-month courses, however, and many of the advanced students undoubtedly received more than the nine months of training in the "union" schools.
28. Considerable information on these schools is available for the researcher who desires to pursue this subject further: In addition to sources already cited, see: (1) 7854th MID, Report No. R-527-48, "Special PW Camp for Antif Training in Talitsa, Ivanovo Oblast," (s), 24 Nov 48; (2) USFA Special biweekly Rpt No. 88 (S), 1 April 49, Part III; (3) Hq EUCOM (S-2 Branch, Berlin Command), "Prisoner of War Information," (S), 12 May 47; (4) USFA Special Biweekly Rpt No. 61, (TS), 19 Mar 48, Pt II; (5) 7707 MIC OI Special Triangle Rpt No. 19, (TS), 12 May 47, par. 2.
29. P-018c, p. 45.
30. Ibid., pp. 51-52.
31. P-018e, pp. 141-42.
32. Ibid.
33. P-018e, App. 1, "The Secret of the Power of the Soviet State" (by former Major Otto Schnuebbe), pp. 18-115. By omitting the name of the author and by making minor changes in the text, the Historical Division, EUCOM, were able to mimeograph a limited number of copies carrying a "Restricted-Security Info." classification.

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Chapter VI

1. Stewart, op. cit., Ch. XI, pp. 357-59.
2. Ibid.
3. GHQ, FEC, MIS, ATIS Interrogation Report No. 60, 29 Oct 48, (S), p. 2. This report, compiled from interrogations of thousands of repatriated Japanese, presents a comprehensive picture of conditions in camps for Japanese, the indoctrination program, and the organization of the camps. The following discussion of indoctrination methods used with Japanese prisoners is based almost entirely on this reference.
4. Ibid., pp. 59-9.
5. Ibid., p. 7.
6. Ibid., pp. 11-15.
7. This policy emanated from Soviet political headquarters in Khabarovsk. Lt. Col. Kawarenko was the director of this work and had charge of both the Propaganda Section of the Khabarovsk Political Department and the Japan News.
8. Ibid., pp. 15-16.
9. (1) Ibid., pp. 16ff; (2) GHQ, FEC, Special Report "Japanese Prisoners of war -- Life and Death in Soviet PW Camps," undated.
10. Ibid., pp. 31ff.
11. GHQ, FEC, Special Report, "Japanese Prisoners of War -- Life and Death in Soviet PW Camps." Full descriptions of the port of Nakhodka and of the activities which took place there appear in this reference.

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APPENDIX I

CASE HISTORIES

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Item 1

Ineffective Indoctrination of Officer Prisoners

Two German officers, a pilot and an artillery observer, were forced down behind Russian lines and captured in November 1941. They were treated well, subjected to about a week of interrogations during which no cruel or unusual methods were used to extort information, and interned in a camp under reasonably comfortable conditions with about one hundred other German officer prisoners. On one occasion, the Russians put on a military demonstration with an infantry company, an artillery battery, and several tanks. This "exhibition force" was well-trained and very well-equipped with winter gear. The demonstration consisted of a sham battle staged outside the camp for the benefit of the German officers who were guarded very inconspicuously. Red Army officers mingled with the Germans and asked for criticism and comment. The Russians were obviously attempting to create the impression that the entire Red Army was as well-trained and equipped as the exhibition group. The Germans were courteously attentive, but unimpressed. Other than this demonstration, no attempt was made to propagandize the prisoners in this camp during the winter of 1941-42.

* Source: MS P-018c, pp. 13ff.

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In the spring of 1942, the two officers with a number of other prisoners were shipped to another camp where about five hundred officers, from the rank of lieutenant to colonel, were already interned. Treatment in the first camp had been good, but in this second camp the Russians were even friendly. The prisoners were treated as officers; and Russian officers often dined with them. A large library of books in the German language, both fiction and non-fiction, was maintained. Among the books were a considerable number of the basic works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and other prominent writers on communism and socialism. Apparently, the Soviets hoped that, out of sheer boredom, the prisoners would read and be influenced by these works.

During 1942, the Soviet authorities in the camp unobtrusively organized a number of reading "clubs" or discussion "circles" among the prisoners and began to give lectures, followed by discussions, on a variety of subjects, including communism in the bolshevist form. Attendance at these lectures was not compulsory, but a record was kept of those who attended regularly. The usual Communist formulas for the solution of world problems were presented in these lectures; bolshevism was extolled as the real and true form of democracy; and the mission of the Soviet Union was said to be the liberation of the masses from the yoke of capitalism. The lecturers never referred to Hitler or to national socialism.

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The program, according to the two German officers, was a clever and psychologically well-managed attempt to convert the prisoners to communism gradually through self-study, but the attempt was not successful because of the critical attitude of the prisoners.

In the fall of 1942, the prisoners of this camp were "sorted out" and one of the two, the pilot, sent to a new camp containing only Air Force officers. The three hundred prisoners in this camp were, for the first time, asked officially which officers would volunteer to work for the Russians. Specifically, they were asked to collaborate on the writing of a training manual for the Soviet Air Force. At this time, and for the short period the reporting officer was there, no German volunteered to do so. In October, this officer was transferred to another camp where both officers and noncommissioned officers of the Luftwaffe were interned. Here, propaganda lectures were held according to a schedule, and the subject matter dealt largely with the international aspects of bolshevist ideology. The speakers were mostly German emigree Communists who for the first time spoke strongly against Hitler and national socialism.

The two German officers made separate escapes to Germany during the winter of 1942-43 and reported to German authorities who combined their information in one report.

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Item 2

Effective Indoctrination of Officer Prisoners

[Note: This case history is based on information secured by German interrogators.]

Two German fighter pilots, both officers, were forced to the ground and captured near Moscow in 1941. They underwent treatment and indoctrination very similar to the officers whose experiences were described in Item 1. These two officers, however, were gradually convinced of the soundness of communistic theory and were sent to a special camp near Moscow in the summer of 1943 where only about twenty other "converted" officer prisoners were interned. This transfer occurred after the Battle of Stalingrad (the German defeat there was largely responsible for the final conversion of most of the twenty officers) and falls outside the period under discussion here. It should be noted, however, that these collaborators were trained as saboteurs and subsequently sent on missions behind German lines. The first mission assigned to the two officers (who worked as a team) was to assassinate Hitler. They were smuggled into Germany with the help of Russian partisans, but their adventurous undertaking failed and they returned to Moscow where their failure was not held against them. Subsequently, they were captured during an attempt to carry out a plot against the German commander of an occupied area in Russia.

*Source: MS P-018c, pp. 17-19.

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Item 3

Effective Indoctrination of an Enlisted Prisoner

[Note: This case history is based on a United States Army interrogation report. The source was a German corporal who had been captured by Americans and sent to a prisoner-of-war camp in the United States. He had been captured by the Russians in December 1941, had become a collaborator, and had accepted an espionage mission in Germany. His "cover story" as an escapee was accepted by German authorities, and he had been integrated back into the German Army where he was serving as a Soviet agent at the time of his capture by Americans in July 1944. Under the circumstances, this source cannot be considered entirely reliable, but his story does not differ essentially with information secured from many other sources and may be considered reasonably accurate.]

In the camp where the German corporal was interned in December 1941, the political commissar was a Russian who had lived in Germany for years before the war and spoke perfect German. He gave preliminary instructions to the prisoners and assured them that there was absolute freedom of speech and press in the camp. Secret meetings were forbidden, however, as were threats by groups against those whose views did not coincide with theirs. The prisoners were then organized into groups according to age, occupation, and nationality, and these groups held meetings, at which time views of individual members could be voiced. Attendance at such meetings was compulsory. At the first meeting, both pro-Nazi and anti-Nazi views were expressed. Minutes were taken and kept on file.

Before long, Wilhelm Pieck visited the camp, and, after reviewing minutes of the meetings, made a speech to the prisoners

*Source: Hq Eighth Sv Cmd ASF, Int Rpt, sub: Russian Education of German Prisoners of War, (C), 9 Mar 45.

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based on the arguments recorded in those minutes. The salient points of this speech were: (1) Germany had definitely lost the war (the strength of British and American forces was emphasized); (2) Hitler and the Nazi party were leading Germany to utter ruin; (3) Germany's only salvation was to overthrow Hitler and the Nazi party, and the longer the German people delayed, the more suffering they would endure. Refuting the principal pro-Nazi argument that the prisoners were German soldiers and must remain loyal to the Fuehrer, Pieck stated that Hitler had deceived them and that their principal obligation and duty was to the German people.

In this speech, and the many which followed, Pieck made no mention of communism. He was followed by Weinert and other less notable German emigrees (many of whom used fictitious names) who made speeches along the propaganda line laid down by Pieck. The German corporal, never having been sympathetic to the ideology of national socialism, soon accepted the views of the speakers. The fact that the speakers were of German nationality influenced his decision.

With Pieck's arrival, the camp groups were reorganized into: (1) a Directorate (Klub), (2) a Select Committee (Engeres Aktiv),
* and (3) an Expanded Committee (Erweitertes Aktiv). Other camps

*Some translators have used the terms "Club," "Inner Circle," and "Outer Circle" as the English equivalents for the titles of the three echelons of the camp political organization.

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apparently underwent similar reorganization, and by mid-1942 the membership and activities of these groups were more or less as follows:

The Directorate or "Club" consisted of nine full-time members who printed an anti-Nazi newspaper, made speeches, and otherwise directed anti-Nazi activities within the camp. The members had usually demonstrated leadership ability in the Select Committee of another camp, had been sent to a school for advanced training, and had then been assigned to a camp Directorate.

The Select Committee consisted of barracks, company and camp leaders (prisoners appointed to act as officers in the camp organization), a group of from twenty to thirty-five prisoners who worked part time in organizing political gatherings.

The Expanded Committee usually had from forty to eighty members, all of whom had declared themselves openly against nazism.

No efforts were made to indoctrinate prisoners with pro-Communist propaganda during the time the German corporal was interned. Except for a handful of Poles, Finns, Romanians, and Italians, the prisoners were all Germans; but each nationality had its own political movement. Austrians and Germans were separated in one camp, combined in another.

The corporal demonstrated enthusiasm and ability as a member of the Expanded Committee and soon became a member of the Select Committee. After making a number of speeches, he was sent to a school for advanced training from April until August 1942. He was then assigned as a member of the Directorate of another camp where he made speeches, organized meetings, and soon became leader of his group. The political organization of this camp was similar to that in the

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camp where he began his anti-Nazi activities. Near the end of October, the corporal was asked by the camp commissar whether he would accept a mission in Germany. He agreed and was sent to a villa near Moscow where he was trained as a radio operator during November and December. (He learned to handle code at the rate of eighty-five letters a minute.) After receiving further instructions concerning his mission and learning an excellent cover story, he was returned to Germany by means of a parachute drop.

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APPENDIX II

Ineffective Indoctrination of a German Chaplain

In one particular camp where the indoctrination program was going badly from the Soviet point of view, the commissar feared for his position because the attendance at the meetings had dropped to 8 per cent of the prisoner population. The commissar took this as a pretext to hunt for ringleaders among the "reactionaries" and approached a chaplain, a Luthern minister, who had been particularly annoying because of his neutral attitude. Another German prisoner who was present reported the following conversation:

"Why didn't you sign the last peace resolution?" demanded the commissar.

"Because I keep away from politics."

"Do you realize that by your attitude you are sabotaging our efforts among the prisoners -- efforts directed toward peace? If you had signed, then the hundred and twenty-eight officers who attended your religious service last Sunday would also have signed the resolution.

"That is a matter which I cannot judge," replied the chaplain.

"Do you realize that as a chaplain you have to advocate the cause of peace?" asked the commissar. "You belong on the side of

*Source: MS P-018e, App. 1, pp. 79ff.

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the poor who want peace. That is, you belong on the side of the Soviet Union and not on the side of capitalists! You should support propaganda for peace."

"Herr Commissar," returned the chaplain, "you are confusing the profession of a minister with that of a political activist. It is the duty of the Church to make people directly responsible to God. The poor as well as the rich are responsible before God. Not only the capitalistic world of the West but also the Communist world of the East is responsible before God and under His jurisdiction."

This reasoning had the commissar stumped for a moment, then he continued with a new line of attack. "You are denying your own reformer! Luther took up the cause of the poor against the feudal rulers of the Middle Ages."

The chaplain was unperturbed. "The purpose of the Reformation," he explained patiently, "was to place man in a position of direct responsibility before God. No church nor any nation, whether capitalistic or communistic, can take this from him."

"You don't know Luther!" accused the commissar, remembering his Marxist training, "like all movements in world history, the Reformation was an economic and social one."

"Herr Commissar," said the chaplain firmly, "if I am to discuss the Reformation with you, I must expect of you a deeper grasp of the circumstances surrounding it. I consider it better to discontinue this discussion."

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